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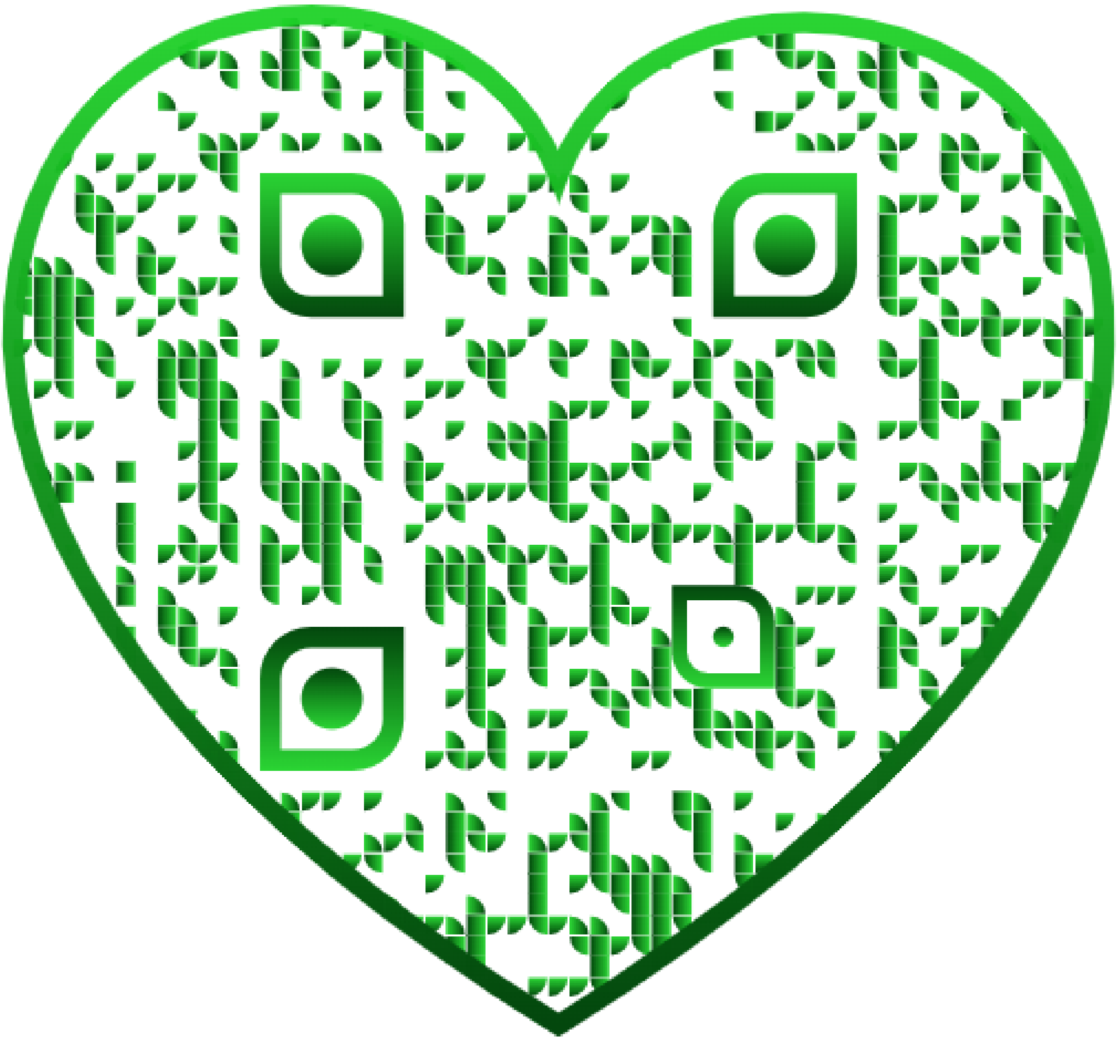

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What makes landscape photography so addictive is the moments where it all comes together. Here, a beautiful sunset and the stunning location of O'Reilly's lodge, Lamington NP, helped me capture this shot.

IMAGE: MIKE O'CONNOR

THE THRILL OF THE CHASE

MIKE O'CONNOR, EDITOR

Why is landscape photography so addictive? It's a question I found myself pondering while judging The Landscape Awards 2025, the results of which you'll find in this issue of *Australian Photography.*

To begin with, being outdoors and immersed in natural beauty simply feels good. It's an escape—a meditative experience that, when combined with the creativity photography demands, becomes something powerful. You're not just documenting nature; you're interpreting it through your own lens.

Then there's the thrill of the hunt—the pursuit of perfect light, a compelling composition, or the right weather conditions. It's this chase that keeps landscape photographers returning again and again.

Now in its third year, The Landscape Awards clearly demonstrates that many of you understand this addiction. We've seen countless familiar names among the entrants, and many photographers appear multiple times in the shortlists. We all have cherished images tucked away on our hard drives—the product of years of trial, error, and growth—and we're proud to offer a platform to showcase them.

Personally, I find great joy in seeing how the genre continues to evolve. Locations rise and fall in popularity, new "it" spots emerge, and innovative techniques breathe new life into familiar scenes. Like the natural world itself, landscape photography is ever-changing—and it rewards those who embrace this fluidity.

If you asked me what makes landscape photography truly addictive, I'd say it's that moment when everything aligns: the location, the light, the gear, and your creative vision. That feeling—when you capture something you're genuinely proud of—is pretty hard to beat.

The images featured in The Landscape Awards 2025 celebrate those rare, magical moments we all strive for as photographers. They are a testament to the passion, patience, and artistry that define this genre, and we're proud to share them with you. ✪

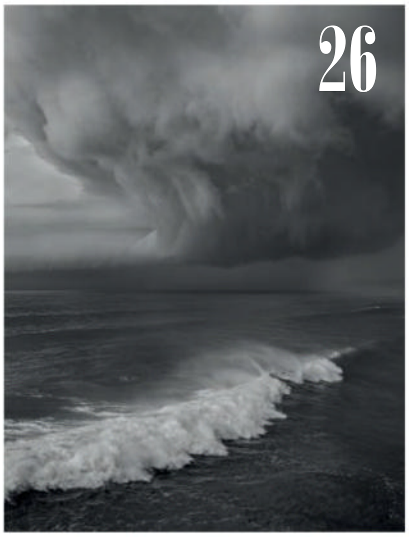
Mike

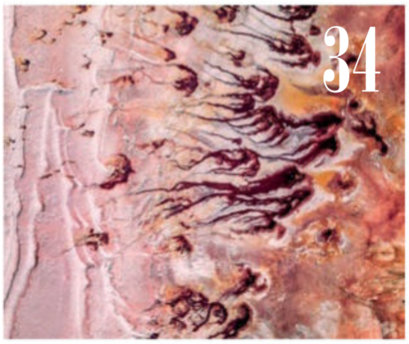
JUNE - JULY 2025

CONTENTS

Australian Photography
AUSTRALIANPHOTOGRAPHY.COM

19
THE Landscape AWARDS 2025





42
КОМПРЕССОРНАЯ

18 THE LANDSCAPE AWARDS 2025 – THE RESULTS!
Our annual celebration of the best Landscape photography from Australasia, these are the winners of The Landscape Awards presented by Camera House.

19 THE LANDSCAPE AWARDS 2025 – LANDSCAPE CATEGORY
Check out the winner, runner-up and top 20 images from the hotly contested Landscape category of the Awards, covering everything from epic vistas to remote icescapes.

26 THE LANDSCAPE AWARDS 2025 – SEASCAPE CATEGORY
Beautiful scenes from our coasts and beaches, the Seascape category is as broad as the oceans, with all our finalists showcasing mastery of this challenging genre.

34 THE LANDSCAPE AWARDS 2025 – AERIAL CATEGORY
Celebrating the best images captured from up high, these images are the best our judges saw that present a rarely seen view of the world.

42 THE LANDSCAPE AWARDS 2025 – URBAN CATEGORY
A truly challenging category to excel in, urban requires photographers to emphasise the beauty and diversity of our built environment. These were the judges' picks.

50 INTERVIEW: MIKE BOWERS ON FIT TO PRINT
Seasoned photojournalist Mike Bowers has delved into the Fairfax archives to curate the NLA's latest exhibition. He talks to Mike O'Connor about what he discovered.

52 COMPOSED TO CAPTIVATE
Composition is the secret sauce that transforms an ordinary landscape into something extraordinary. Landscape expert Richard Young shares his approach to crafting truly creative compositions.

62 REVIEW: FUJIFILM GFX100RF
It's got a monster 102mp sensor in a body that's truly tiny. But is Fujifilm's newest medium format camera a marvel or a mess? Drew Hopper finds out.

66 REVIEW: AFFINITY PHOTO (IPAD)
Over the last few years, Affinity has quietly established itself as a genuine Adobe alternative. Steve Thomas takes the ultra-portable editing version for a spin.

DEPARTMENTS

8 QUICK SNAPS
The latest news and products from the world of photography.

12 YOUR BEST SHOT
Take a look at the best images from our 'Movement' photo competition.

58 APS ONE FRAME AND COLUMN
News, views, and images from the Australian Photographic Society.

THIS ISSUE'S COVER

Captured by photographer Scott Leggo, his image *Classic Kimberley* came third in the Aerial category of The Landscape Awards. "Watching the sun go down over the impressive Ragged Range was a sight to behold," he says. "An ancient and rugged landscape, it really did feel like another world compared to what I am used to seeing across other areas in Australia." Nikon Z7, 24-70mm f/4 lens @ 27mm. 1/250s @ f6.3, ISO 2000.

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FIT TO PRINT

Defining Moments from the Fairfax Photo Archive

Clockwise from top left:
One of Miss Stange's pupils mid leap during a dance performance, New South Wales, 20 February 1933, nla.obj-162055996; *Signal Master Alf Gibson looking through a telescope, Sydney,* 1927, nla.obj-163109733; *Lifesavers paying out rescue ropes during a surf carnival at Bondi Beach, Sydney,* 1933, nla.obj-162743987; *HMAS Melbourne departs Sydney on its last cruise,* 1928, nla.obj-162850919

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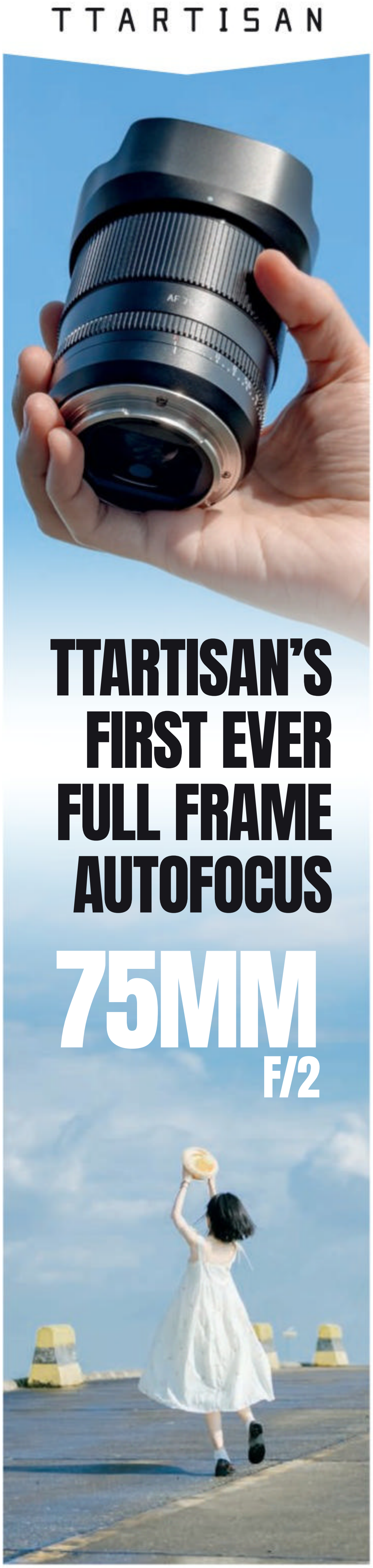

QUICK SNAPS

WORLD PRESS PHOTO ANNOUNCES 2025 WINNERS

WORLD Press Photo has announced the winners of its 2025 World Press Photo Contest, showcasing some of the world's finest photojournalism and documentary photography.

This year the competition has expanded significantly, growing from 33 total winners in 2024 to 42 in 2025.

For the past three years, there has been one winning Single and one winning Story per region. This year, there are three winners in each of these categories per region. There's also one Long-Term Project winner per region.

The overall 2025 World Press Photo of the Year winner was announced as Palestinian photographer Samar Abu Elouf for his image of a young Gazan boy recovering from war injuries. The 2025 Contest also takes place as part of the 70th anniversary celebrations for World Press Photo.

Executive Director World Press Photo, Joumana El Zein Khoury, said the world is not the same as it was in 1955 when World Press Photo was founded.

"We live in a time when it is easier than ever to look away, to scroll past, to disengage. But these images do not let us do that. They cut through the noise, forcing us to acknowledge what is unfolding, even when it is uncomfortable, even when it makes us question the world we live in – and our own role within it."

You can see a large selection of the winners at autralianphotography.com.

POLAROID ANNOUNCES FLIP WITH INTELLIGENT FLASH

POLAROID has announced the Polaroid Flip, a new point-and-shoot instant camera that features a new "scene analysis" tool that alerts photographers when their shots will be under or overexposed.

The Polaroid Flip is a modern instant camera that combines vintage design with contemporary features. It revives the classic folding design from the early 1980s, featuring a clamshell-style body where the flash folds down to protect the lens and block the shutter button when not in use.

The new Polaroid Flip skips a traditional continuous autofocus system with moving lens elements.

Instead, it uses a unique setup with four fixed-focus lenses, each optimised for a specific distance — 0.65, 0.85, 1.2, and 2.5 metres. These lenses are mounted on a rotating wheel, and the camera uses a sonar sensor to determine the subject's distance, then automatically selects and rotates the appropriate lens into position for a sharp shot – pretty nifty.

The Flip is compatible with Polaroid i-Type and 600 instant film, and it includes a replaceable rechargeable battery that's charged via USB-C.

No local pricing or availability has been confirmed, but the Flip will retail in the US for $199.99. ($315 AUD).

Find out more at polaroid.com.

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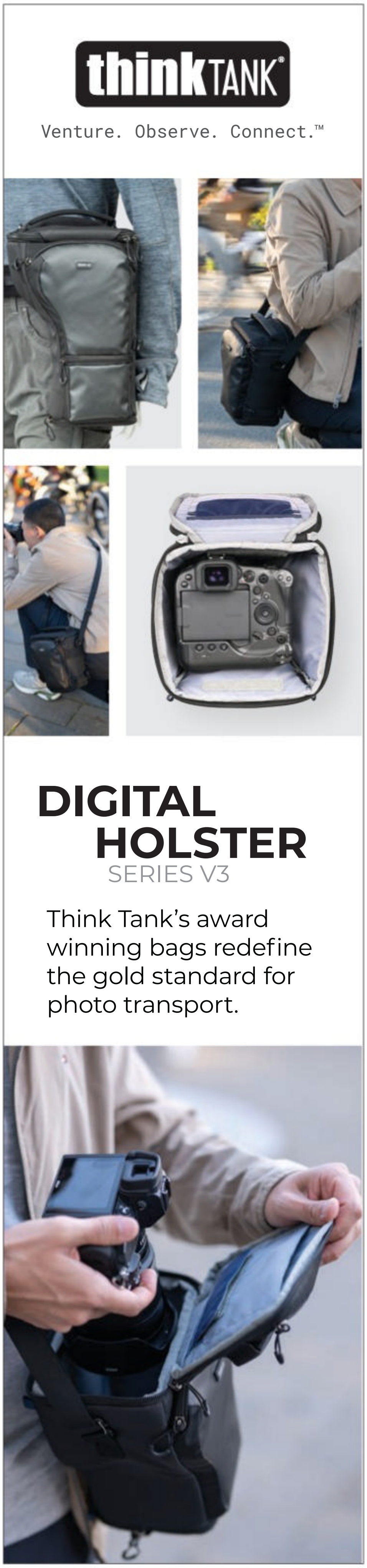

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SONY ANNOUNCES $6,799 50-150MM F2 GM LENS

HOT on the heels of the recently released Sony FE 28-70mm F2 GM lens is Sony's new FE 50-150mm F2 GM.

Weighing in at 1,340g, the lens features a constant aperture of f2.0 and constant barrel length – meaning that it is an internal zoom design.

The lens is designed to capture fast-moving, low-light subjects, with purportedly ultra-fast autofocus tracking that can keep up with the α9 III's 120 fps maximum burst speed — even while zooming.

On the negative side – it doesn't have IS and instead relies on your camera's in-body IS – and it also lacks the ability to use teleconverters to extend the focal length.

As for the internal lenses themselves – there are two precision XA (extreme aspherical) elements, which help maintain high resolution across all apertures, including F2.

Additionally, two Super ED (Extra-low Dispersion) and three ED glass elements reduce chromatic aberration, while Nano AR Coating II helps to minimise flare and ghosting.

Also, focus-breathing is kept to a minimum – which will help when shooting video.

The removable tripod foot has 1/4" and 3/8" screw holes, and a dust/moisture resistant design ensures it will survive rain if shooting outdoor sport, or champagne spills at a wedding.

If you are thinking of going the f/2.0 route, price-wise, the Sony FE 28-70mm F2 GM is $4,100 – $5,299 (original RRP), while the new FE 50-150mm F2 GM launch price is $6,799.

The lens is available for pre-order, and you can find out more about the lens on the Sony website, sony.com.au.

GOOGLE CREATES FREE TOOL TO HELP TEACH STUDIO LIGHTING

GOOGLE has launched a free tool to help teach studio lighting.

Learning Light is part of Google's newly released series of AI "experiments" focused on arts and culture.

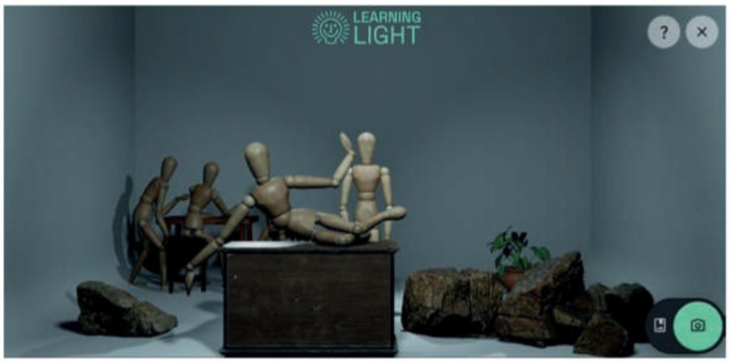
The tool combines an AI chatbot with a virtual stage, allowing users to learn about different lighting setups and see them in action. The tool is built around four different lessons on the lighting, and you can use it with a variety of well-known artworks, such as Edward Hopper's *Nighthawks*.

Meanwhile, a chatbot guides users through eight short and to the point mini-lessons, each focused on a different aspect of lighting – such as intensity, colour, shape, position, mood, and more.

The tool does have some limitations – it's not possible to change the lights' position, so you're stuck with the existing positioning, although in many of the lessons you can move the props around.

Additionally, since the lessons are focused on stage lighting, it lacks accessories photographers would use to modify the light, like softboxes or beauty dishes. But, there is still the ability to make changes to lighting angles and intensity.

Also, rather than allowing open-ended conversations, the chatbot is pretty bare-bones – only offering a series of preset responses for users to choose from. In fact, the chat bar is completely disabled during the lessons, so there's no way to ask follow-up questions.



That said, you can exit the guide at any time to explore on your own, and despite the limitations, the tool is accessible, easy to use, and of course, free. ✪

You can try it for yourself at bit.ly/4cQCT4Q.

Experience the Magic of New Zealand's Winter Landscapes!

Step into a breathtaking winter wonderland and capture New Zealand's South Island at its most spectacular. From iconic snow-dusted peaks to hidden alpine gems, New Zealand Photography Workshops' expert-led photography tours are designed with the perfect blend of adventure, inspiration, and skill-building.

Choose the winter photography experience that's right for you. We'll take care of everything, whilst you immerse yourself in awe-inspiring scenery.

Winter Landscape Photo Tour - 7 Days
26th July - 1st August 2025 - Departs from Queenstown, NZ

Prepare to be amazed. This incredible photography adventure takes you to all the iconic winter locations of the South Island—plus a few secret spots only expert local guides know about!

Light & Land Winter Photography Tour – 12 Days
20th August - 1st September 2025 - Departs from Christchurch, NZ

A dream tour for photography enthusiasts. Join NZ Geographic Photographer of the Year 2024 (landscape and wildlife categories winner), Richard Young, as he takes you on an unforgettable adventure through his favorite winter landscapes, meticulously chosen for their breathtaking beauty.

Style & Composition Winter Retreat – 7 Days
4th - 10th August 2025 - Departs from Christchurch, NZ

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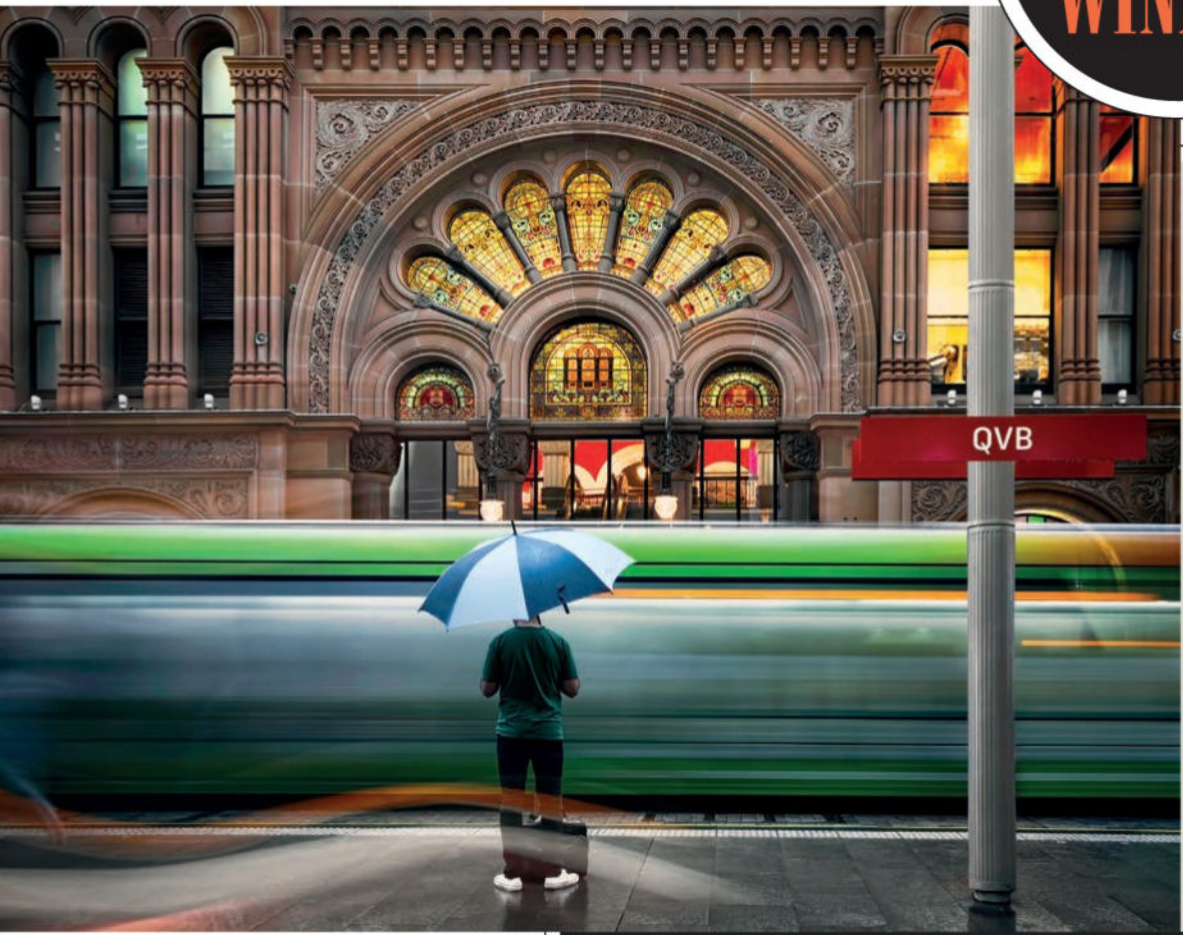
YOUR BEST SHOT

MOVEMENT

A theme aimed to challenge you to look beyond the static and find the rhythm in the world around, we were wowed with dozens of great entries this issue. Here were our picks.

THIS MONTH'S WINNER



MEGAN WILLIS

QVB

EDITOR'S COMMENT

Megan Willis' beautiful image *QVB* was taken on a rainy day in Sydney, outside the city's iconic shopping complex.

"A random commuter stood perfectly still for me (luckily) under his umbrella," she explains.

What makes this photograph stand out is the dynamic sense of movement created by people and a passing tram, captured using a slow shutter speed and a tripod. Combined with the image's rich tones and sharp details, it's a real winner.

TECHNICAL DETAILS

Nikon Z7 II, 17-35mm lens @ 29mm. 1s @ f10, ISO 200.

Thanks to the team at Blonde Robot, Megan Willis has won a Think Tank DarkLight Backpack in 20L size. Also available in 14L, the DarkLight is the ideal blend of tactical style and everyday functionality. Whether you're an enthusiast capturing cityscapes or an advanced amateur exploring the great outdoors, it offers a durable and comfortable solution to carry your gear. Built with a laser-cut MOLLE panel and tactical webbing rails, this rucksack allows you to precisely configure your loadout.

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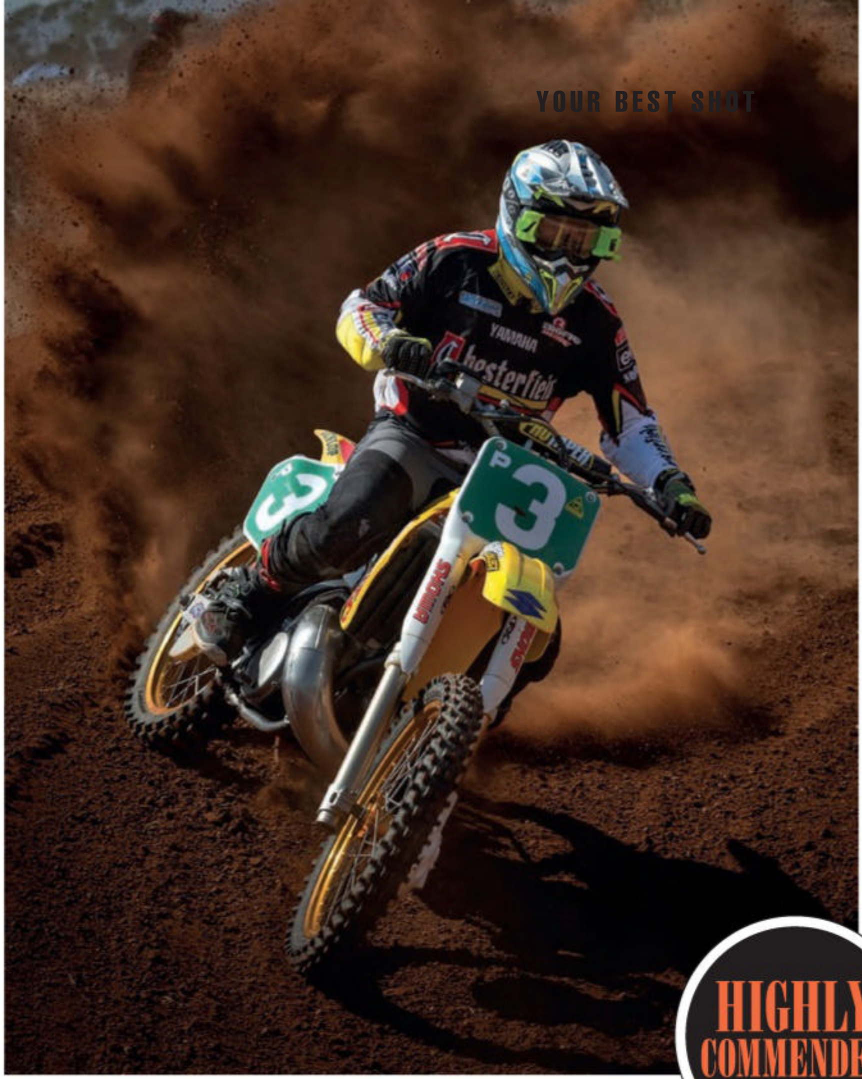

HIGHLY COMMENDED

SABIN FLUTUR

Eat my dust

EDITOR'S COMMENT

Sabin Flutur's great portrait was captured during the Australian Classic/Post Classic Motocross Championships, held in Port Pirie, SA in 2024.

This is a fantastic action shot that showcases a moving subject in quite beautiful light, while also showing plenty of the movement that makes motorcross racing so exciting to watch. There's no distractions here, with the cloud of dust making for a lovely contrasty frame that emphasises the brightly coloured rider.

TECHNICAL DETAILS

Nikon D850, AF-S NIKKOR 70-200mm f/2.8E FL ED VR lens @ 90mm. 1/1600s @ f7.1, ISO 400. Monopod.

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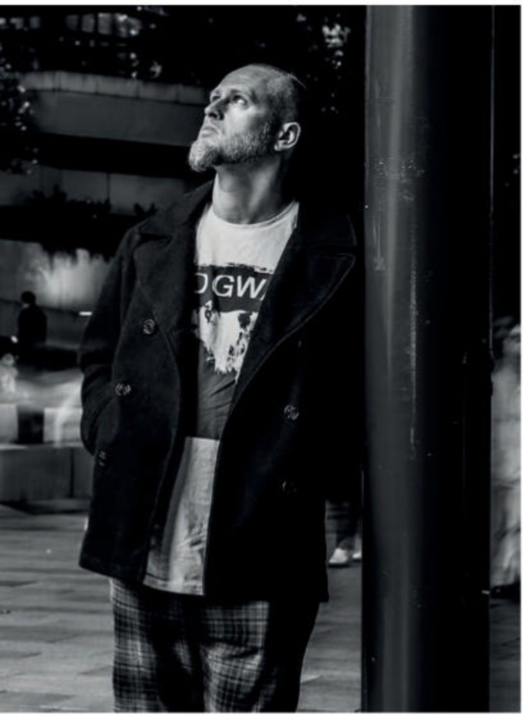


AMY BARROW

The upcoming

HOW I DID IT
Taken outside of the International Convention Centre in Sydney, I wanted to capture a moment of stillness amidst the flow of people. My husband Steve was watching a large screen advertising upcoming shows. The screen just so happened to provide a really nice lighting opportunity. I used a tripod and a timer, and dropped my shutter speed down to a one second exposure, which gave me the desired effect of capturing the movement of people walking past.

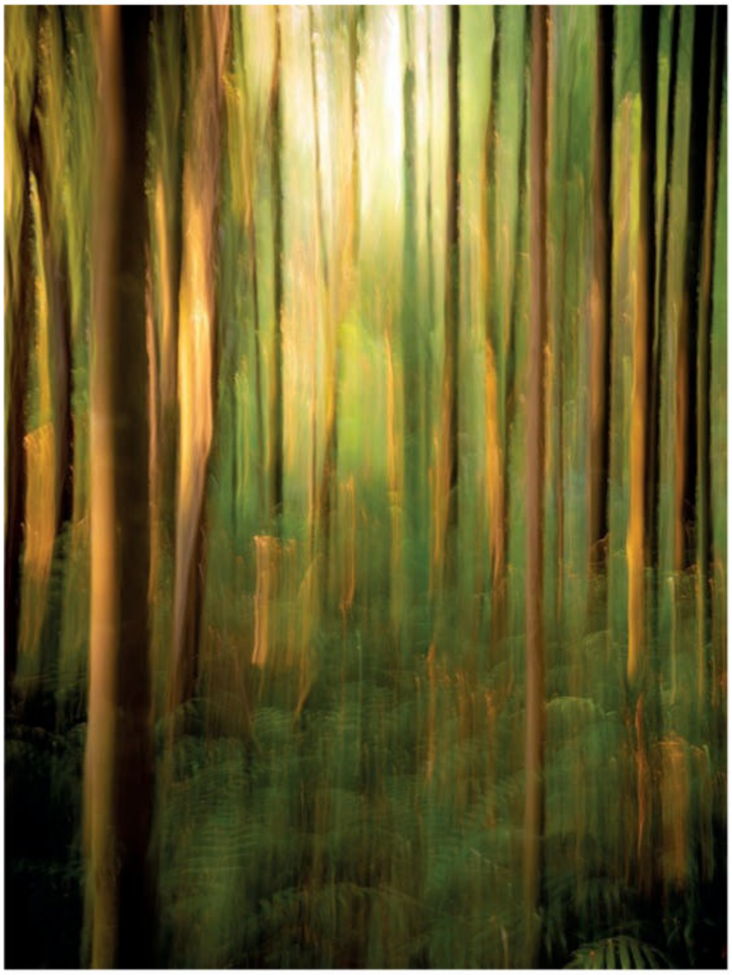
TECHNICAL DETAILS
Canon 200D II, 18-55mm lens @ 40mm. 1s @ f5, ISO 100.

REBECCA WILSON

Untitled

HOW I DID IT
The image was created at Nelson Falls, Tasmania, during the February 2025 bushfires. It was golden hour, and the light was particularly eerie due to the smoke in the air. I used hand-held intentional camera movement to try to capture the dream-like, eerie quality of the forest I was experiencing.

TECHNICAL DETAILS
Nikon D7200, Tokina 11-20mm F2.8 lens @ 20mm. 0.5s @ f8, ISO 200.



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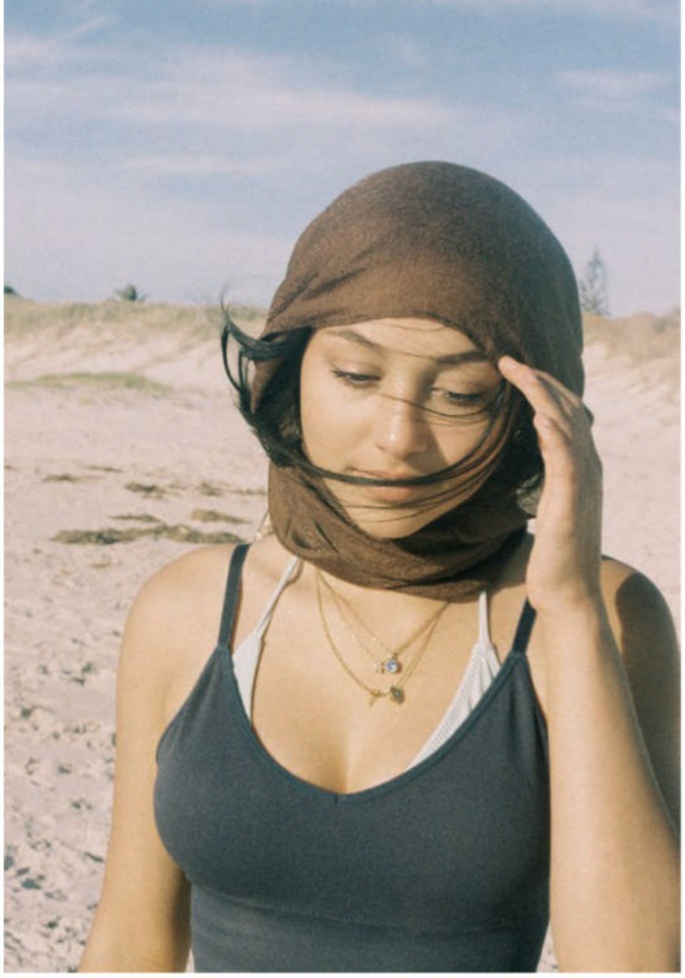
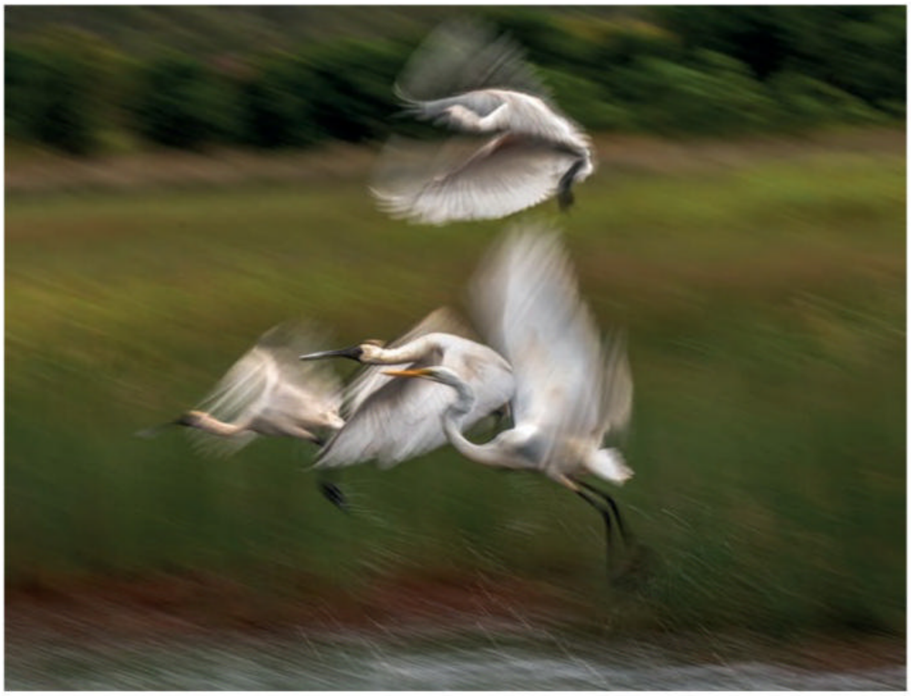


GRACE GIBLIN

Caught in the Wind

HOW I DID IT
I shot this image on 35mm film during a windy day at the beach. My friend was leaning into the strong gusts, almost as if she were trying to push back against them, when the wind caught her hair and swept it across her face.

TECHNICAL DETAILS
Minolta SRT 201 @ 45mm, Zombie 400 (Mr Negative x Film Never Die) film. 1/125s @ f16, ISO 400.



PETER VON KNORRING

#1 Take Off

HOW I DID IT
I focused on a group of spoonbills and egrets on the Townsville Town Common and waited for them to take off. The slow shutter speed emphasised their wing movement.

TECHNICAL DETAILS
Canon R6, Canon EF 100-400 f4.5 lens @ 207mm. 1/30s @ f18, ISO 100.

HOW TO ENTER

YOUR BEST SHOT IS OPEN TO ANYONE IN AUSTRALIA. TO ENTER AN IMAGE IN THE COMP, CHECK THE COMPETITION THEMES AND INSTRUCTIONS BELOW AND EMAIL YOUR BEST IMAGE TO YOURBESTSHOT@AUSTRALIANPHOTOGRAPHY.COM

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DECEMBER 2025
LIQUID
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ANNUAL 2026
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FEBRUARY 2026
FOOD
6 December 2025

APRIL 2026
ABSTRACT
31 January 2026

YOUR ENTRY

1. Email your entry to yourbestshot@australianphotography.com with the name of the competition theme in the email subject line, for example: Weather, Abstract, Landscape, etc.
2. The image file must be the same as your name, for example Jane Smith.jpg. If you enter multiple images, each new image file name should be appended with a unique number, eg Jane Smith2.jpg
3. A maximum of three images can be entered per person.
4. Images must be in JPEG format.
5. Email file size must not exceed 7MB.
6. Please include the following information about your entry in the body of your email: Name, image title and up to 200 words explaining how you created your image. Please also include technical details including camera, lens, focal length, shutter speed, aperture, ISO, tripod (if used) and a brief summary of any software edits.

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THE Landscape AWARDS 2025

A monster storm bearing down on a tiny woolshed, a seascape scene in a truly jaw-dropping location, a beautiful abstract aerial, and an atmospheric long exposure have shared the honours in The Landscape Awards 2025 presented by Camera House.

Now in its third year, the Awards received more than 2,000 entries from photographers in Australia and New Zealand and had a prize pool worth more than $25,000.

In addition, the competition raised over $5,000 for our charity partner, the Australian Conservation Foundation, taking the total fundraising raised by our competition entrants to over $25,000 in the last three years–an amazing result.

Judged by an esteemed panel of professional photographers, the competition sought entries in one of four categories: Landscape, Seascape, Aerial and Urban. The competition was run with the generous support of our great sponsors Camera House, ASUS, Western Digital, and OM System—thank you.

Over the next 30+ pages you can see the top 20 entries in the four categories of the competition, along with judges’ comments on the winners and runners-up for each.

We’re grateful to our panel of professional photographers who judged the competition this year: Matt Palmer, Petra Leary, Serena Ho, Will Patino, Steph Vella, Ignacio Palacios, and Anthony McKee.

Finally, a huge thank you to everyone who entered The Landscape Awards. It’s clear you’re not just into landscape photography—you’re passionate about sharing the places that mean the most to you. We're thrilled to give you a platform to show off this amazing work.

We hope you enjoy the incredible shots coming up in the next few pages. We’ll see you again for 2026’s edition later this year.

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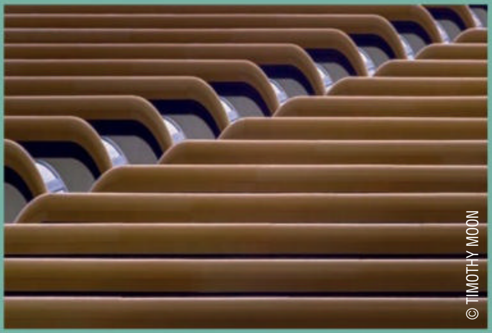
© AMY HUGHES

© SHELLEY MCKIERNAN

© MICHAEL BUDA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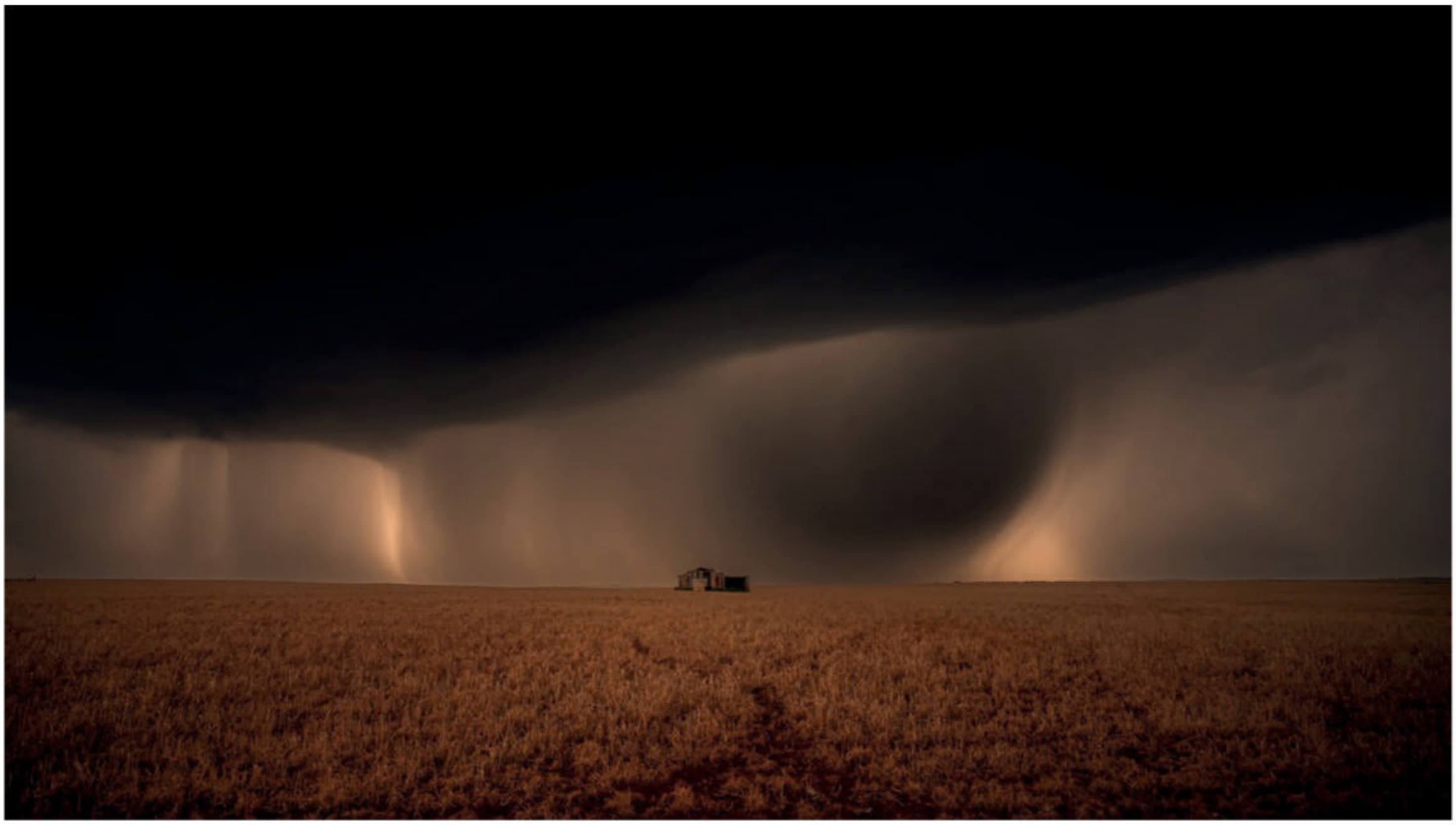


WINNER JASON KEELER

New Zealand-born and now living in Queensland, Jason Keeler has always had an interest in photography. But it wasn't until friends encouraged him—telling him he had a good eye—that he began to take it more seriously.

"I'm predominantly self-taught and have been lucky to form friendships within our uplifting photography community," he says. "We share and learn from one another, but nothing beats getting out there, spinning the dials in manual mode, and discovering what really works."

Although he enjoys experimenting with various genres, landscapes are his favourite—especially storm chasing, long exposures, and timelapses.

@eye_kaptured

THE COMING. *Halfway through a 2,000km journey home, Jason Keeler says he decided to cut short a visit with friends, excusing himself after lightning alerts started 'going ballistic' in the area.*

"Constant direction changes had me weaving down unfamiliar backroads, eyes locked on the storm plumes building in the distance," he recalls.

All the while, he was scanning for the perfect composition.

"A lone shed in a cropped paddock made me slam on the brakes. The storm was moving in fast. The front intensified into a massive rain bomb, and random bolts struck down as the setting sun was smothered, leaving only slivers of light to illuminate the scene."

"I was buzzing inside, drenched within minutes, and beaming. I fired off excited messages and back-of-camera shots to my partner and mates who share this obsession."

For the judges, Keeler's phenomenal image was a standout from a star-studded field of landscapes this year.

Prize: OM-1 Pro Kit system comprising an OM-1 camera body, M.Zuiko 7-14mm f/2.8 Pro lens and M.Zuiko 12-100mm f4 IS Pro lens valued at $7,600; Camera House gift card valued at $1,000; WD gift pack valued at $500; and $2,000 cash.

WHAT THE JUDGES SAID

This image exudes atmosphere and heaviness. The weight of the storm cloud above is framed deliberately and presses down on the farming structure. As a viewer you can feel the pressure. And yet despite the darkness, there is also lightness and beauty. The wisps of light seen through the clouds and falling rain contrast against the heaviness with lightness that draws the viewer into the frame and invites us to consider that while the heaviness is extreme it is also temporary. The image succeeds visually and in emotive metaphor. **Matt Palmer**

This image masterfully balances composition and atmosphere to create a truly jaw-dropping scene. The moody tones enhance the drama, while the lone house, dwarfed by the approaching storm, powerfully conveys the sheer scale of Mother Nature. A beautifully edited and deeply compelling shot. **Steph Vella**

RUNNER-UP JOY KACHINA

Joy Kachina is a landscape and nature photographer based in Northern Tasmania. Her photography journey began in 1996 during a trip around Australia.

She describes herself as passionate about sharing her love for the wilderness and aims to inspire others to protect and cherish our natural heritage. She believes that nature has the power to heal, inspire, and teach us important lessons.

@joykachinaphotography

OUR IMPACT. *"Discovering the endangered Miena Cider Gums in the heart of Tasmania's Central Highlands has profoundly shaped my life," explains Joy Kachina.*

"Over the past three years, I have documented these remarkable trees through wild weather and fierce blizzards, showcasing their incredible resilience."

The cider gum holds a significant place in Tasmania's cultural heritage; Indigenous people historically harvested its sweet sap to craft the traditional fermented drink known as 'Wayalinah', hence the name 'Cider Gum'.

"The deceased trees, now standing like sentinels, bear generational tapping scars," she explains.

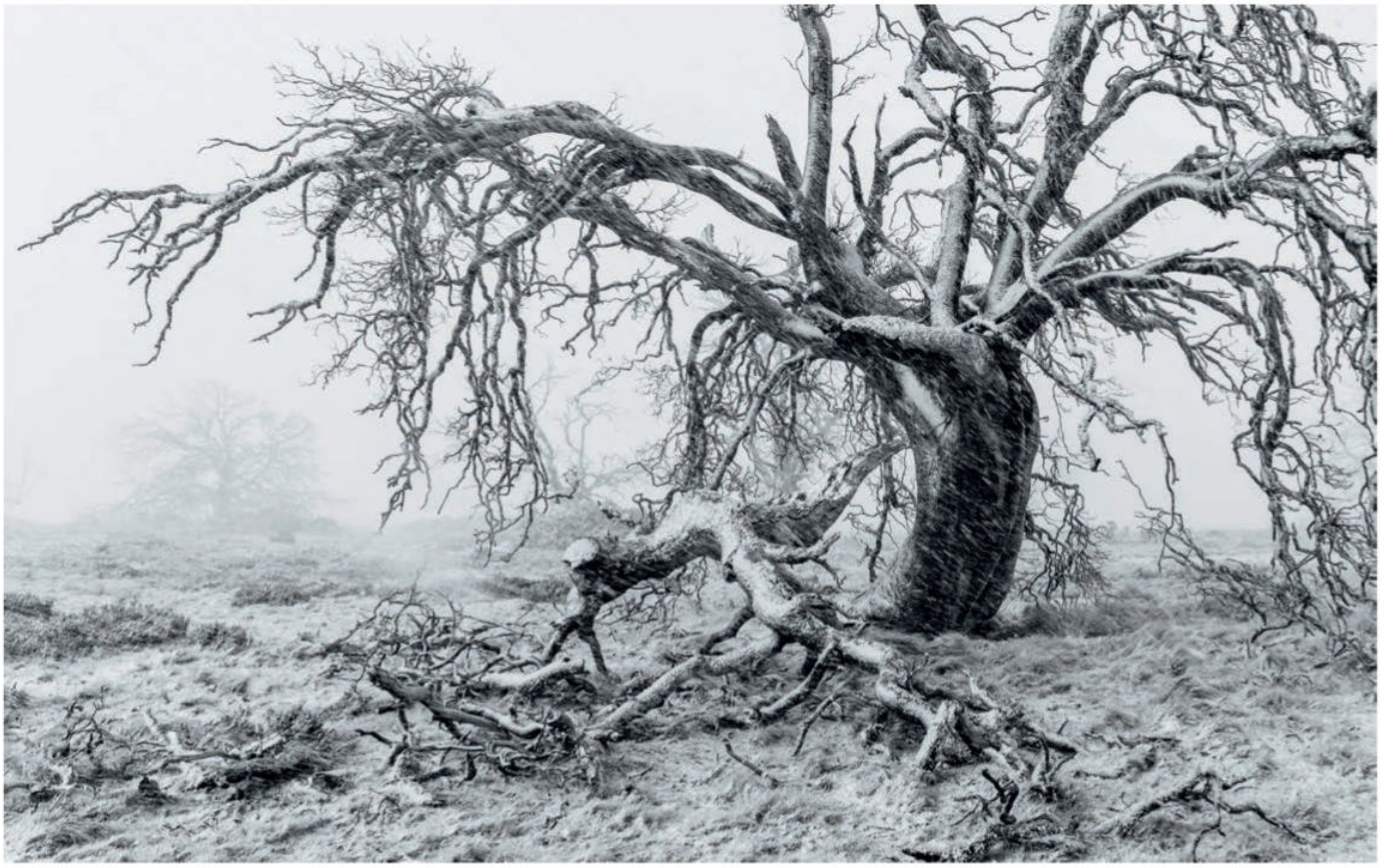
"But unfortunately, their survival is under threat from feral animals, overgrazing, and a changing climate," she says.

"Only eight small living stands are left worldwide, covering just a few hundred hectares in Tasmania's Central Plateau region. By highlighting both the resilience and vulnerability of these trees, my hope is to inspire a call to action for the conservation of our Tasmanian native forests and urge everyone to take steps to protect them."

Prize: $500 Camera House gift card, WD gift pack valued at $250.

WHAT THE JUDGES SAID

This stunning black and white image is packed with captivating atmosphere and detail. The technicality of the image is impressive given that it was shot in snow and driving winds. This same snow offers this beautiful specimen the background separation it needs, and with that separation the image has been composed beautifully with the far left branch arching over and reaching out to the gum in the background. The image exudes a wildness that perfectly represents Tasmania. **Matt Palmer**



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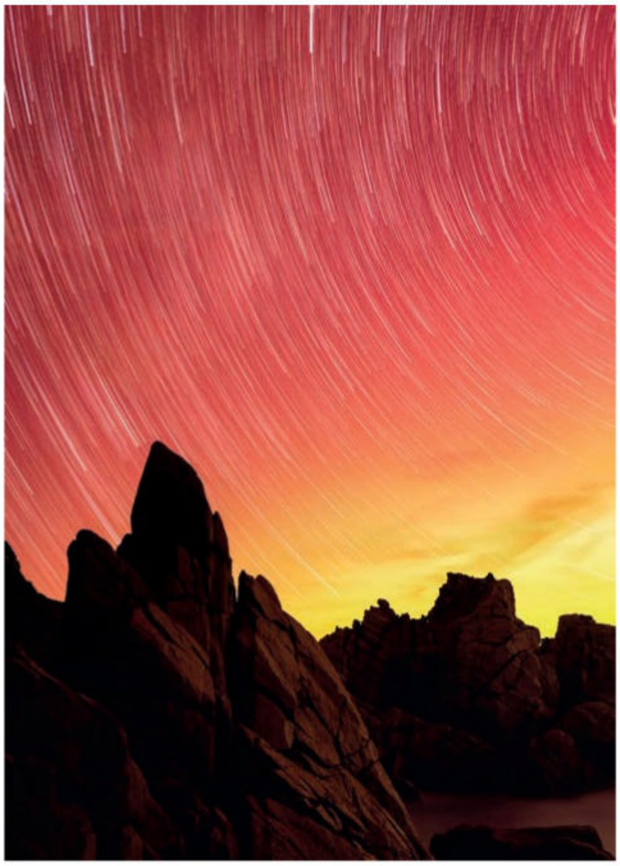
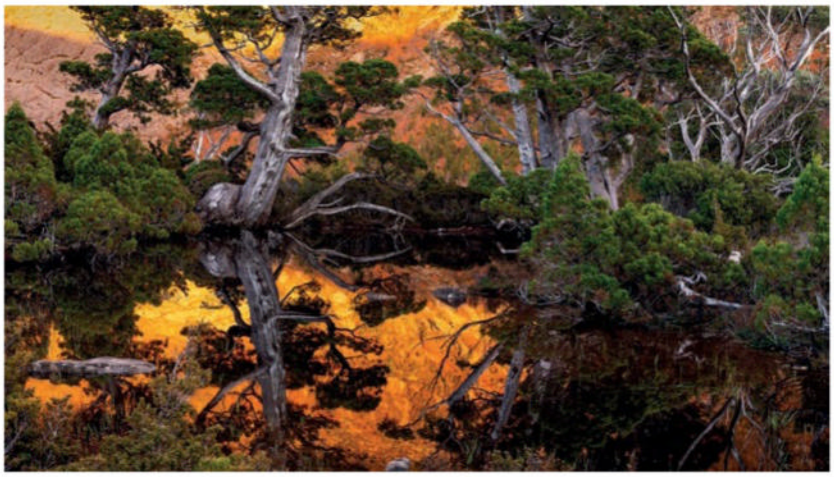
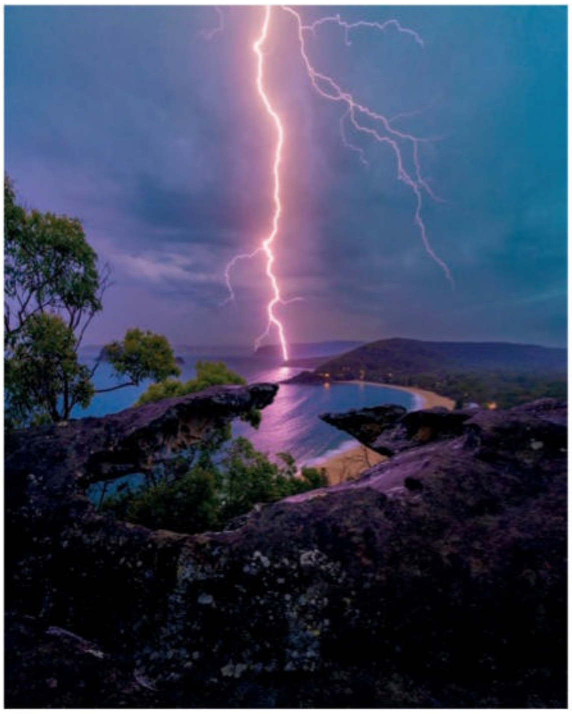


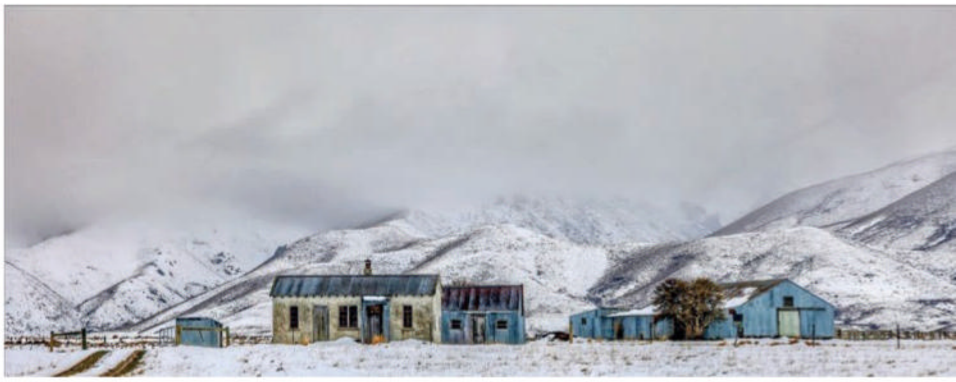
③ **STEVEN FARAH** FALLEN AURORA



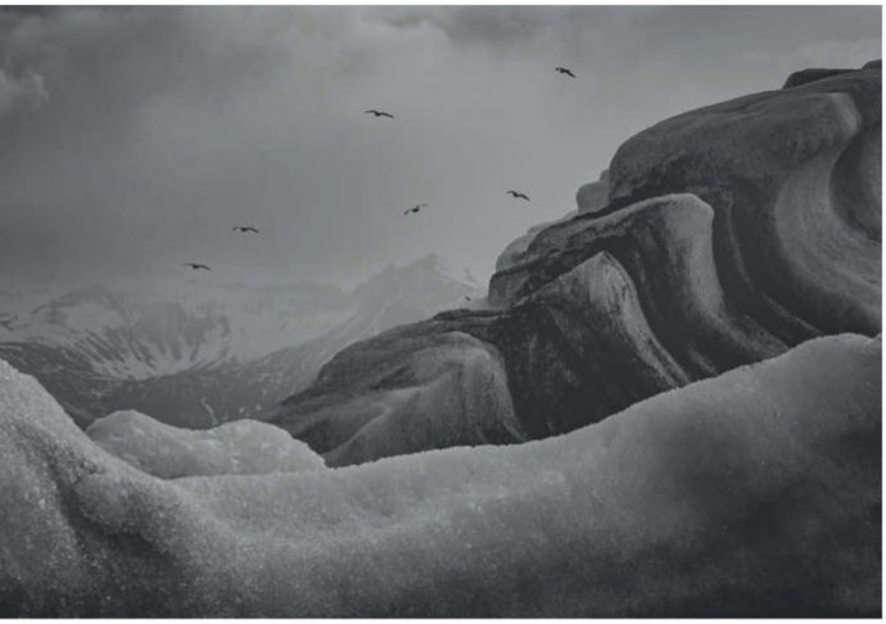
④ **DANIEL SALLAI** FATE



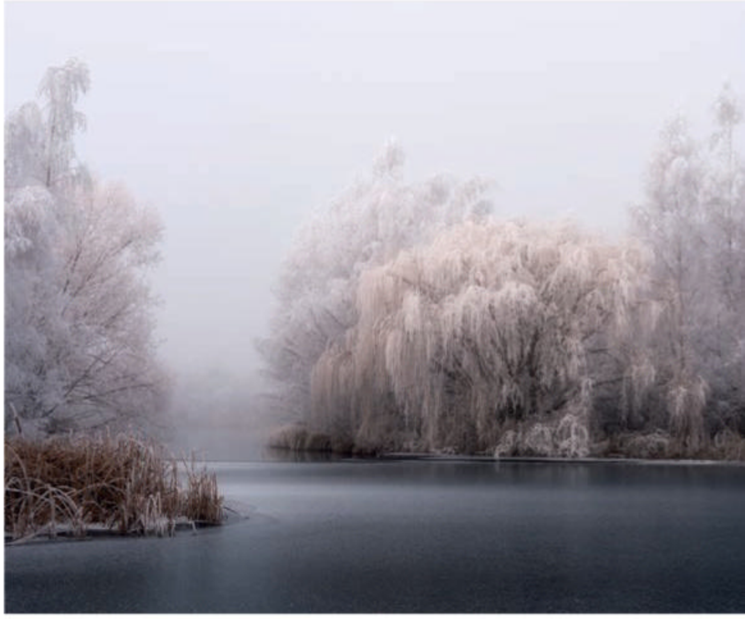
⑤ **MAXWELL TOOBY** DARKINJUNG COUNTRY ILLUMINATED BY LIGHTNING



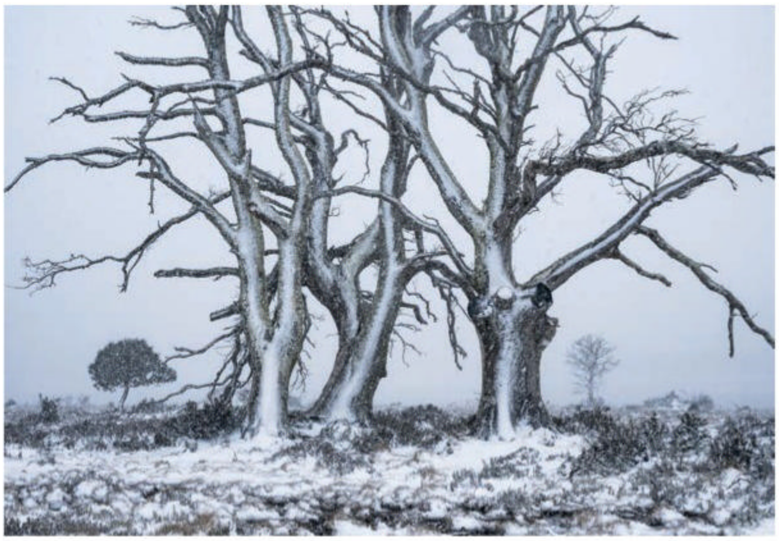
⑥ **AMY HUGHES** HOME HILLS RUN HOMESTEAD



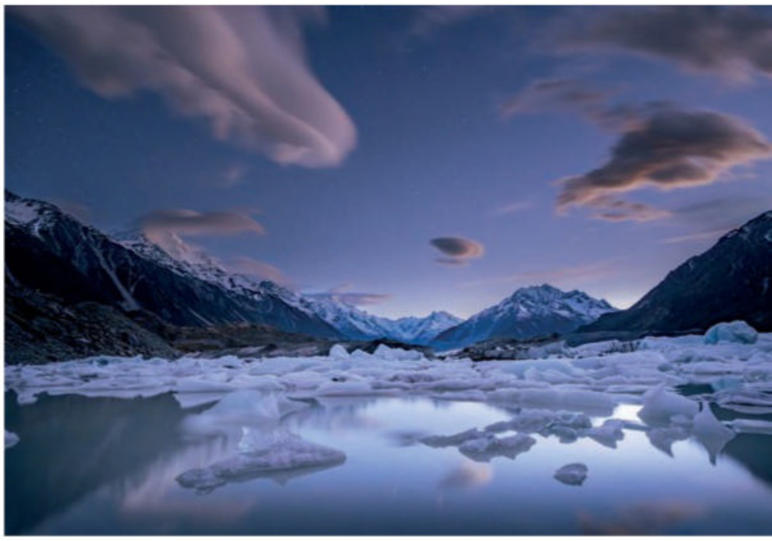
7 **PAUL HOELEN** ICEBERG



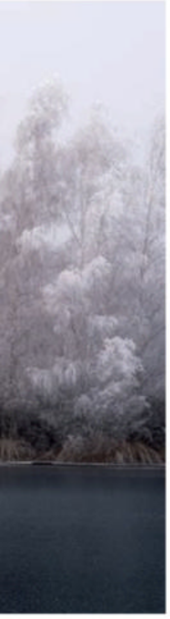
8 **ERIN JACOB** TWIZEL HOAR FROST

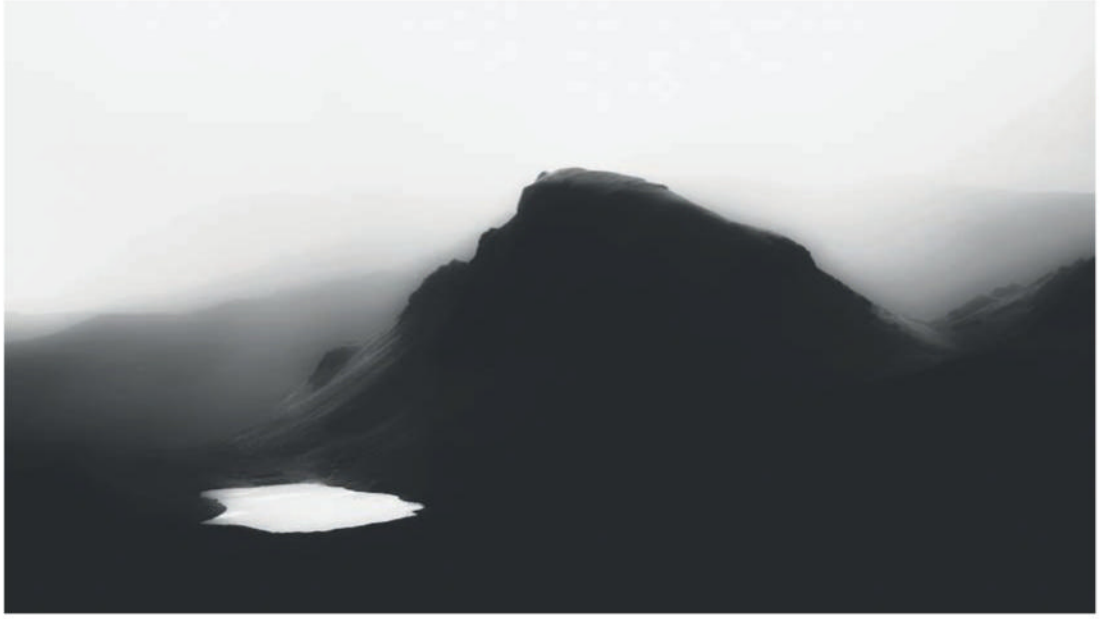


10 **JOY KACHINA** RESILIENCE

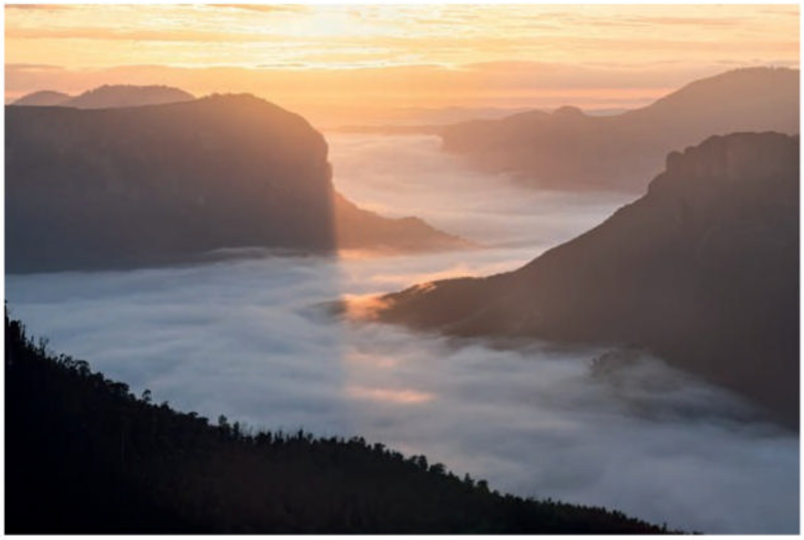


11 **DARREN WASSELL** INTO ANOTHER WORLD

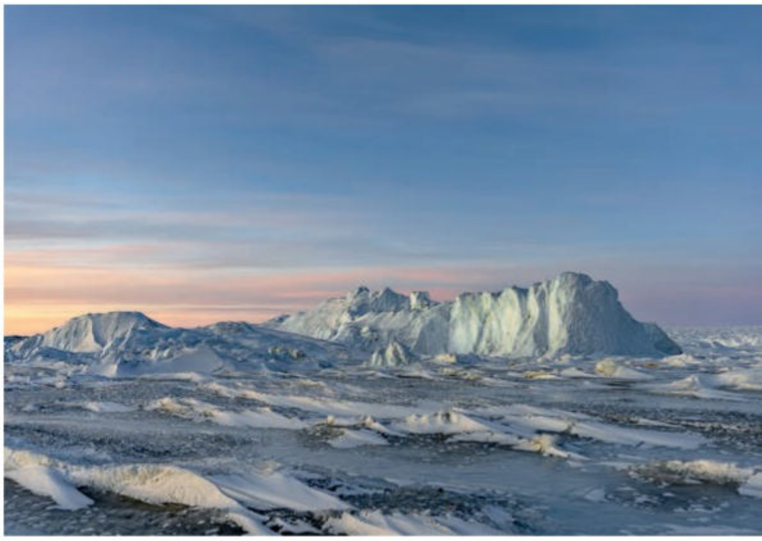




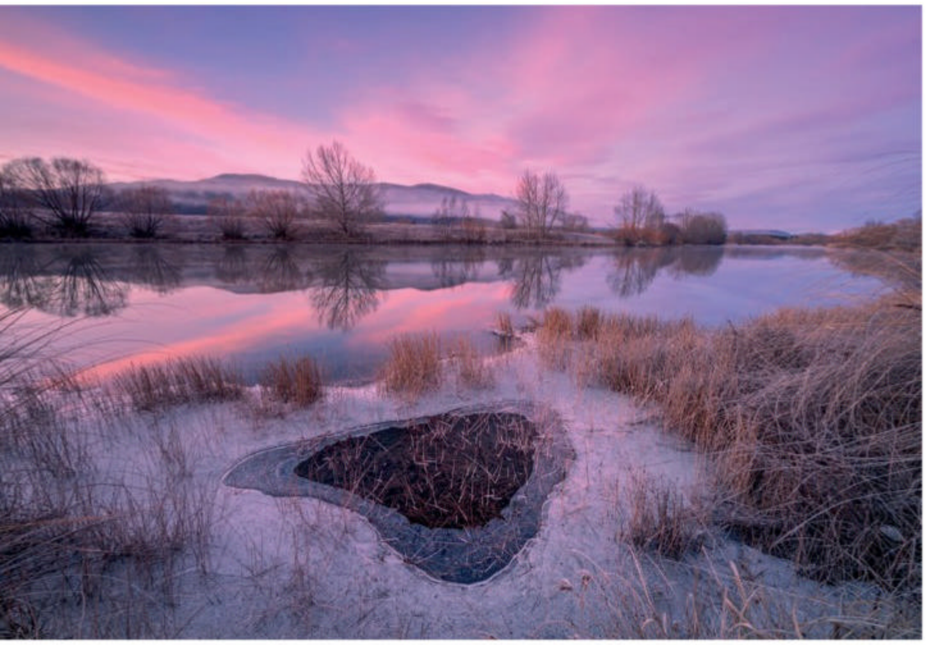
9 **ANKIT SINHA** LIGHT AND SHADOW



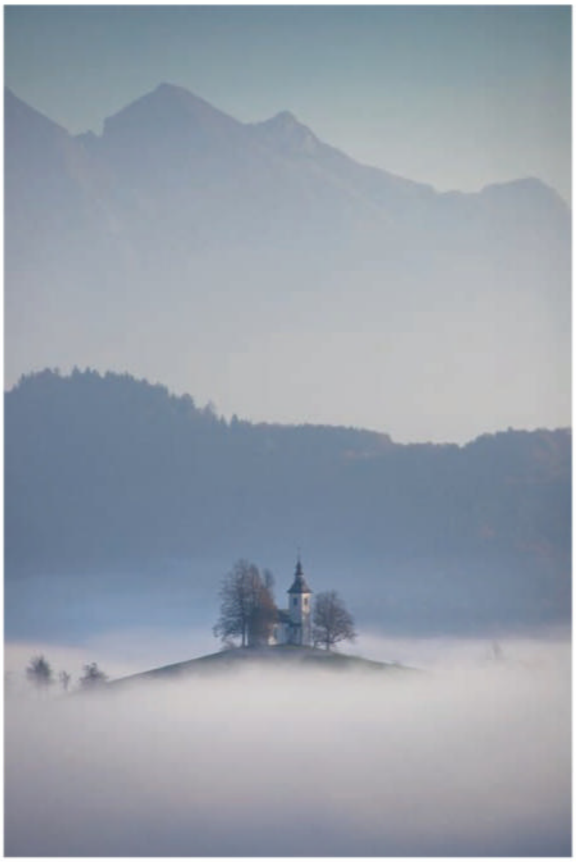
12 **JOHNNY JAMES** RIVER OF CLOUDS



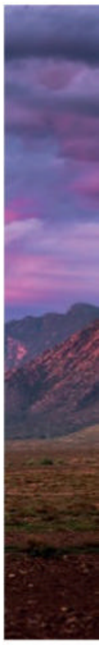
13 **SCOTT CRABBE** ANTARCTIC LANDSCAPE

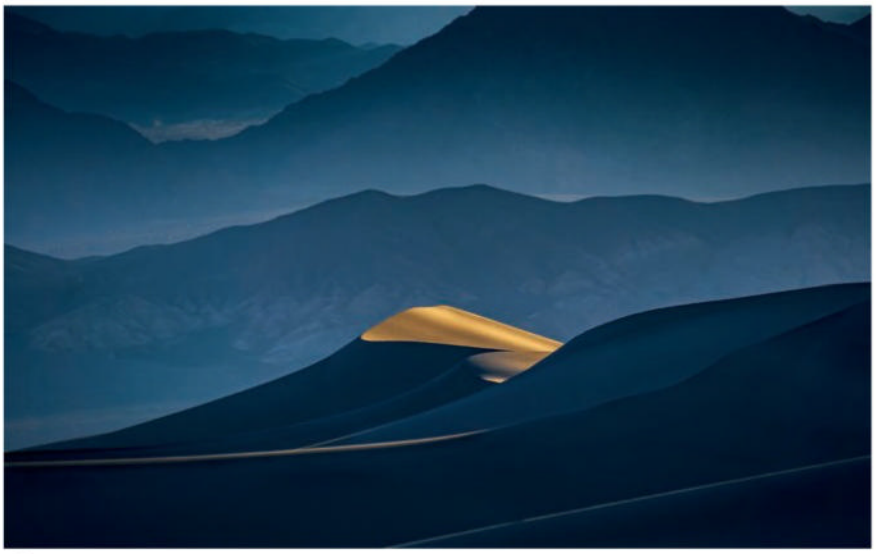


⑭ **LYNNE BROUGHTON** MELTING EYE

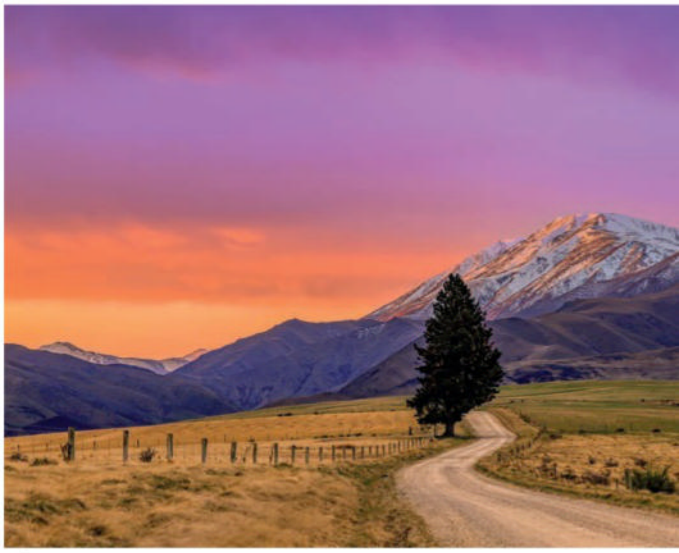


⑮ **CLAIRE DORAN** ST THOMAS' CHURCH, SLOVENIA





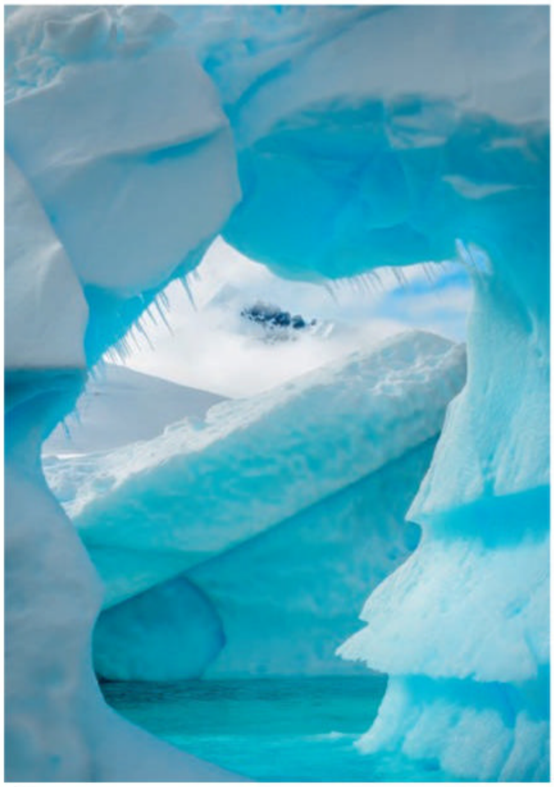
⑰ **MICHAEL BUDA** VEIL OF DAWN



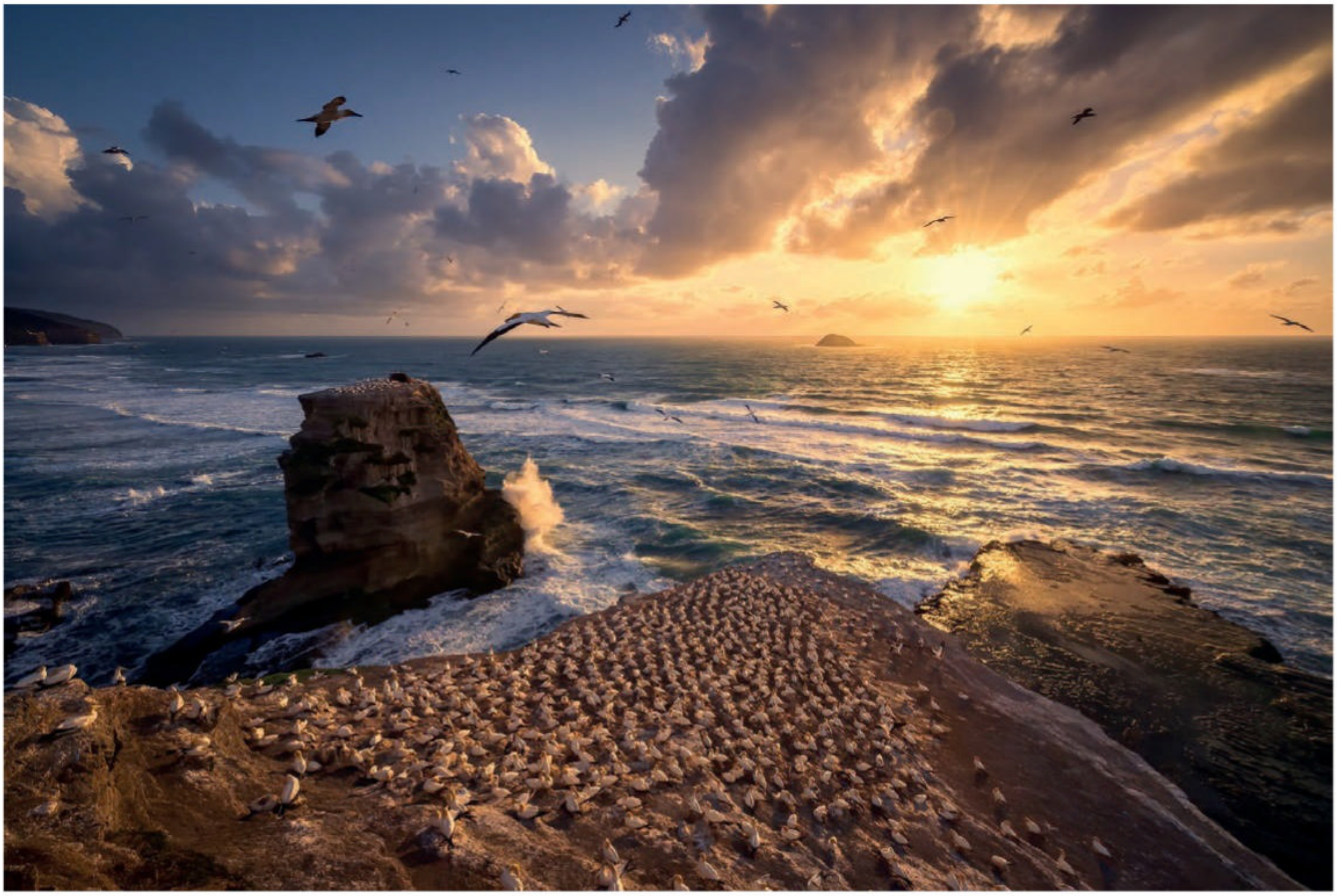
⑱ **AMY HUGHES** SAINT BATHANS DOWNS ROAD

⑯ **TIM MCNEILLY** IF TOMORROW NEVER COMES (2024)

⑲ **ROWAN DAVIE** GLOW



⑳ **LIANNE MANLEY** THE PORTHOLE



WINNER LARN BERGE

Larn Berge is an award-winning landscape photographer based in Te Awamutu, New Zealand, with a keen eye for colour, light and mood.

@larnbergephotographyf11.11

THE GANNET COLONY. *Larn Berge's winning image in the Seascape category was captured at Muriwai Beach in New Zealand, home to a large gannet colony that nests there before the birds make their long journey back to Australia once the chicks are ready to leave.*

"I'm a landscape photographer at heart, so I really wanted to capture this colony through that lens—not just focus on the birds," Berge explains.

"To get the shot, I patiently waited for sunlight to break through the clouds and bathe the landscape in golden light, while also freezing the birds mid-flight. I noticed the waves crashing against the sea stack below, and I wanted to include that wild, untamed element of the location too."

Berge says timing was everything to bring all these elements together in a single frame.

"It was my last shot of 2024—and a very proud capture indeed," he says.

Prize: ASUS ProArt PA278CFRV image-editing monitor valued at $629, Camera House gift card valued at $1,000, WD gift pack valued at $500, and $2,000 cash.

WHAT THE JUDGES SAID

This image has a true WOW factor, drawing the viewer in with its warmth and dynamic energy. The movement of the birds, the crashing waves, and the golden sunlight all come together to capture this scene at its absolute best. Every corner of this image is alive with detail, making it an incredibly visually stunning and immersive shot. **Steph Vella**

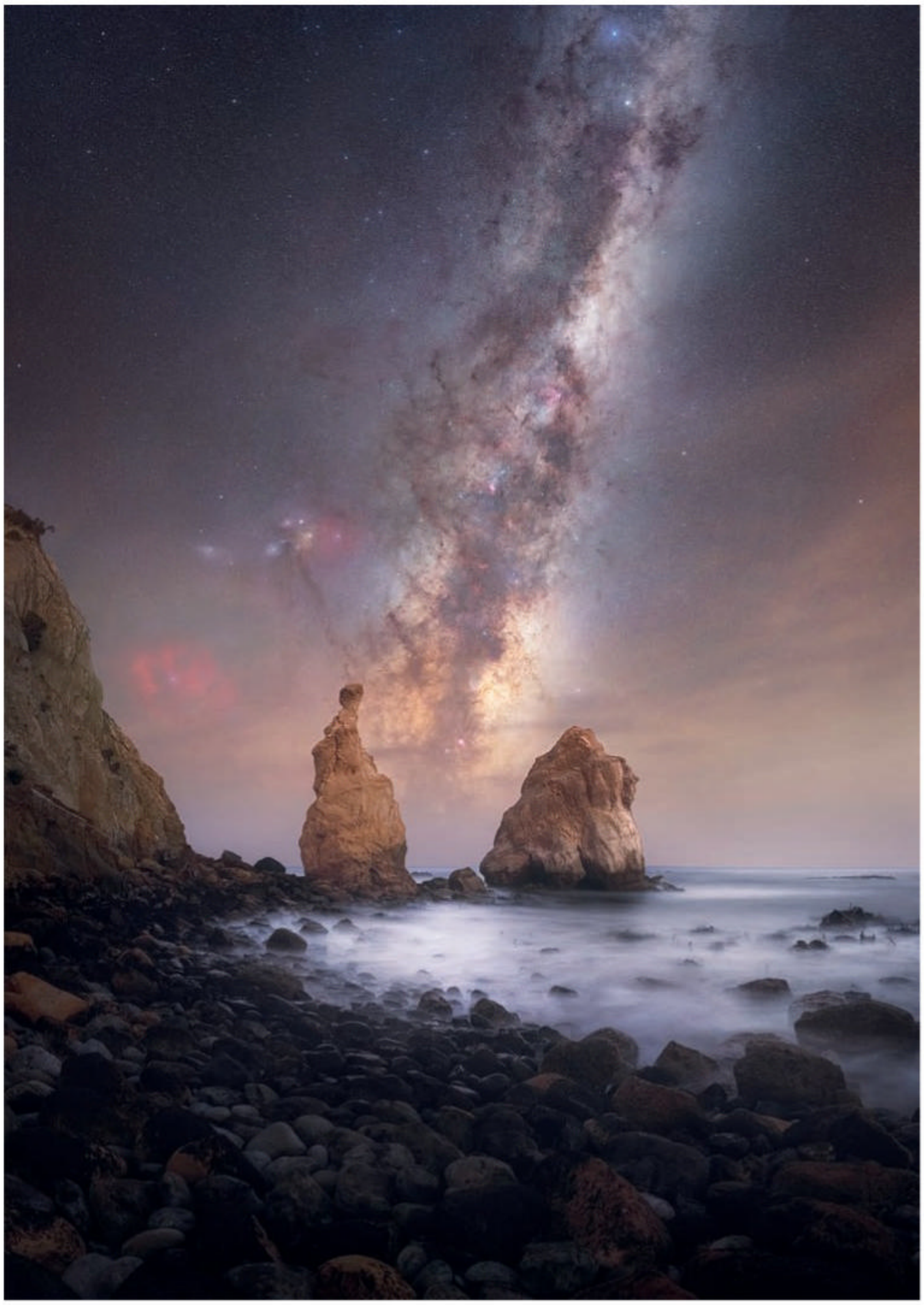
This image really stood out to me, with the striking light and wonderful colour contrast. I particularly like the faster shutter speed used which not only captures the movement of the birds but also the energy and power of the sea. The composition is well balanced and overall I think the photographer has done a great job at capturing an iconic location. **Will Patino**

RUNNER-UP
KAVAN CHAY

Having grown up in rural New Zealand, and now based in the southern city of Dunedin, Kavan Chay says he has always been surrounded by extremely dark skies—but his interest in astrophotography only began after a trip overseas in 2018.

"After that trip and an ignited passion for hiking, I began exploring more of the world around me, using the camera to capture the beauty of what I experienced outdoors. Nowadays, I'm constantly seeking out places to explore under the stars," he says.

@kchayphotos



EVOLUTION OF STARS. *"This set of sea stacks are a prominent feature of a local spot, about 20 minutes away from where I live," explains Kavan Chay.*

"Combined with the fact that there is relatively little light pollution in the area, it became an ideal candidate for a Milky Way panoramic shot years ago, when I was first testing out shooting wide field panoramas with a narrowish lens, in this case, a 40mm.

"At the time that I shot this, it felt appropriate to try again since I had a few extra years' worth of experience and now an Astro modified camera, which allows hydrogen-alpha rich regions of the sky (like the reddish nebulae around Zeta Ophiuchi pictured) to be captured more easily in camera."

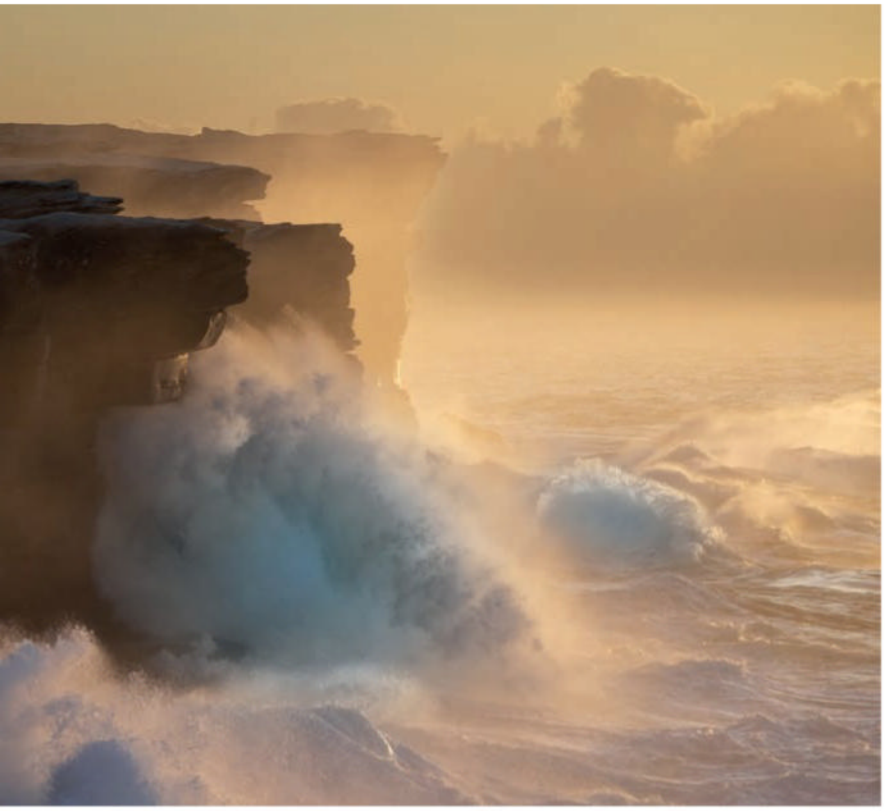
The result is an image that wowed our judges with its confident balance of light, texture and tone, while also managing the many complexities of astrophotography.

Prize: $500 Camera House gift card, WD gift pack valued at $250.

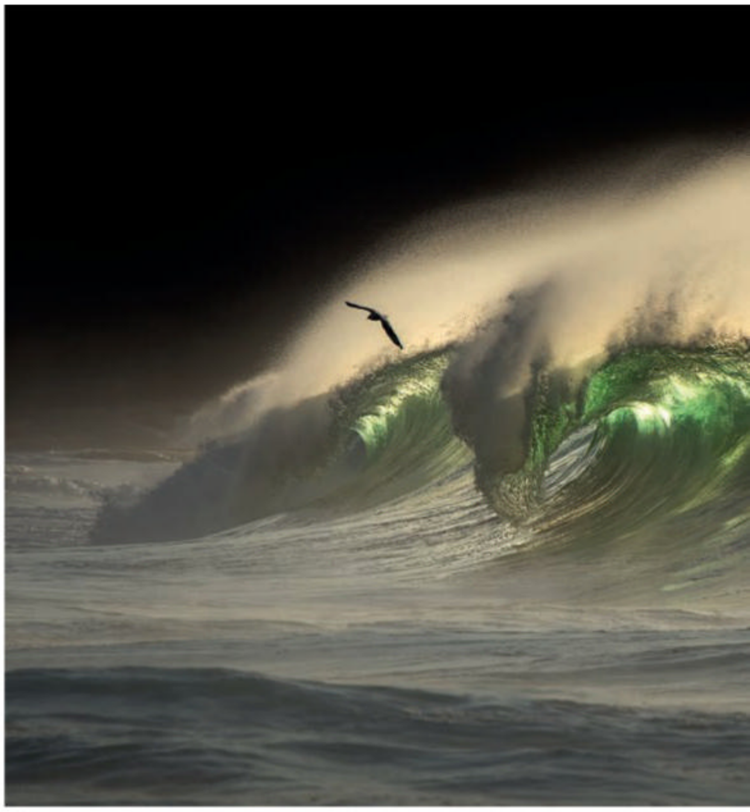
WHAT THE JUDGES SAID

This stunning image perfectly frames the Milky Way between towering sea stacks, offering a rare glimpse into a world rarely seen with the naked eye. The composition reflects meticulous planning and patience, with the Milky Way's alignment creating a sense of wonder and scale. The long exposure softens the waves into a dreamy mist, beautifully contrasting against the rugged rocks and tying the entire scene together perfectly. **Steph Vella**

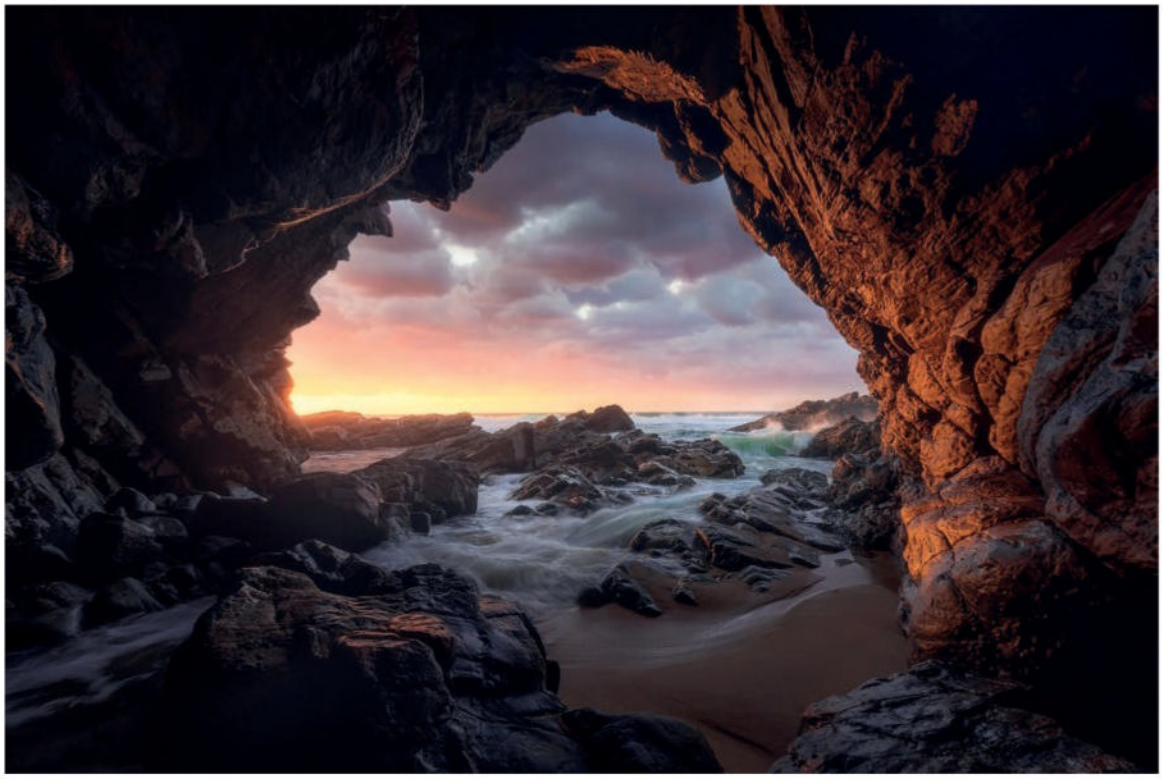
What I love about Kavan's image is the thoughtfully composed alignment of the stars within the rock formation, which naturally draws the viewer's eye into the scene. The lighting and colour are beautifully balanced, and the technical execution is flawless—coming together to create a truly stunning photograph. **Petra Leary**



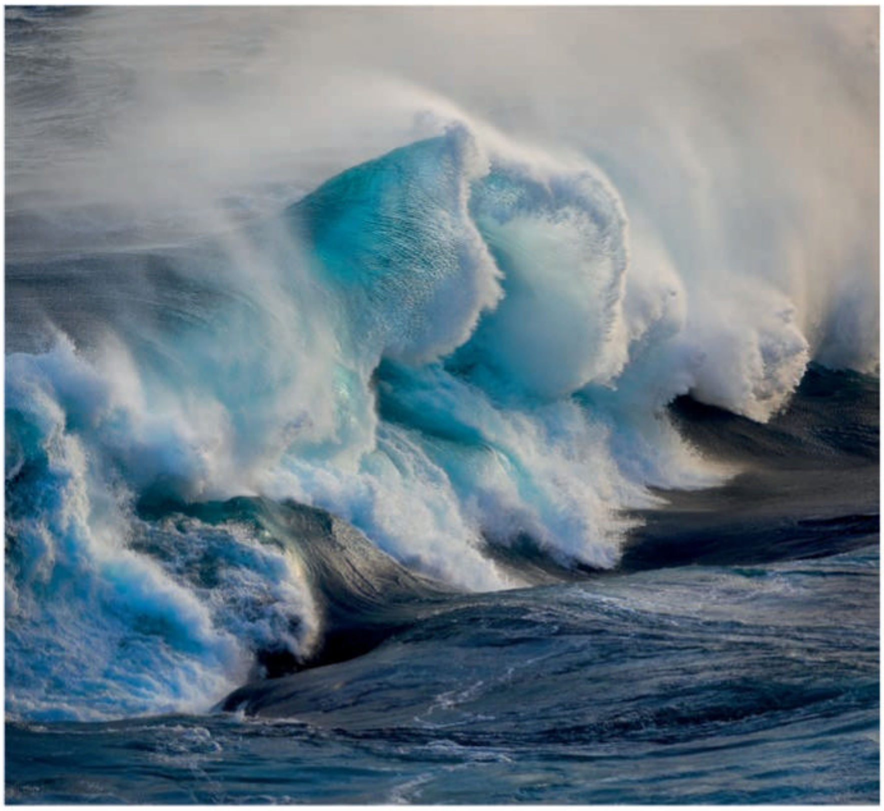
③ **PAUL HOGAN** MERROW VII



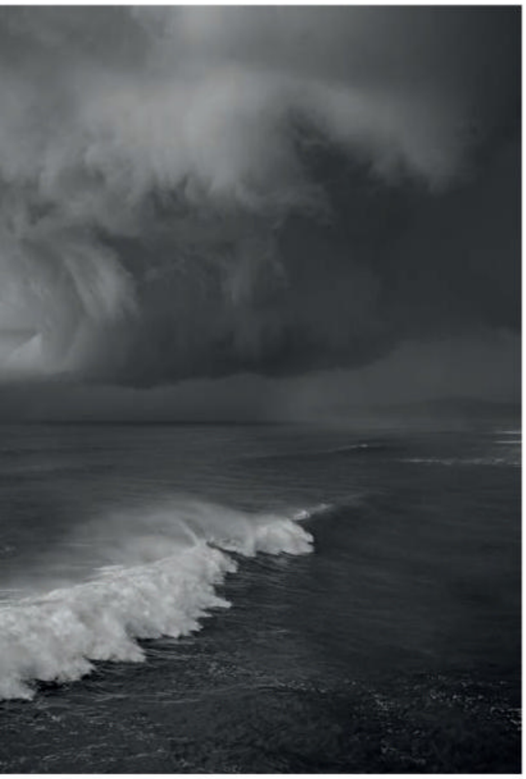
④ **GERGO RUGLI** DANCE OF THE HARPY



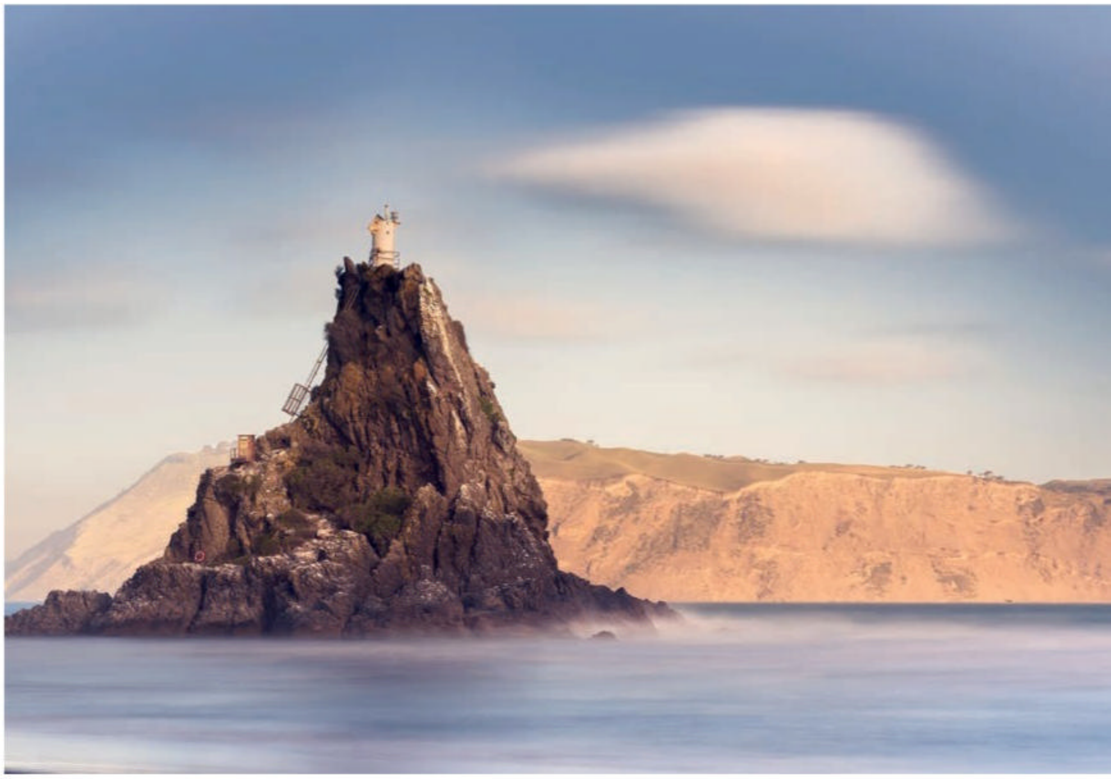
⑥ **SHAUN PAU** COLOUR BLAST AT NOOSA



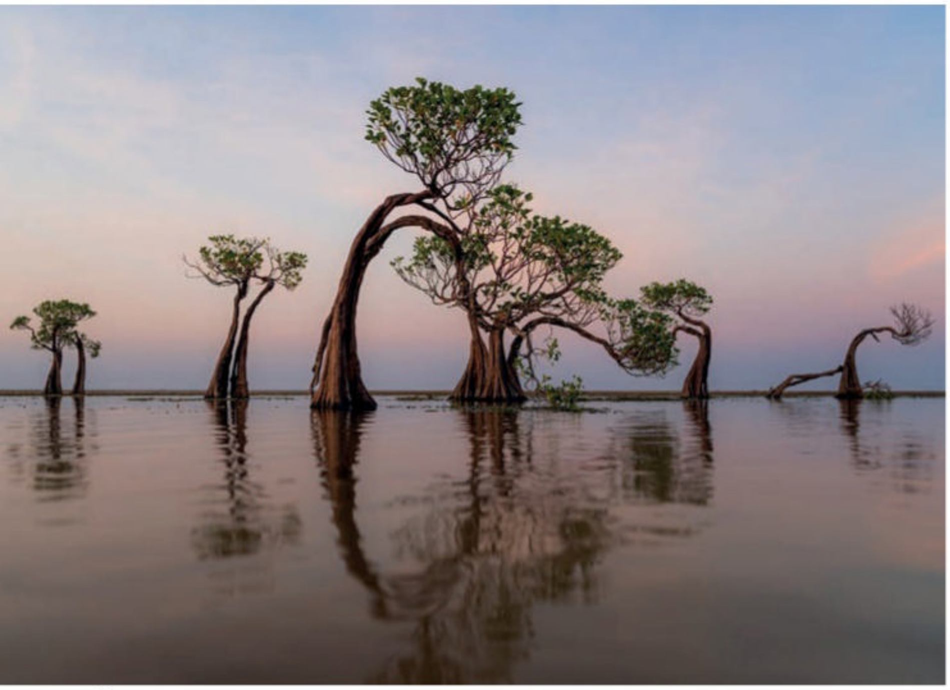
⑤ **SHELLEY MCKIERNAN** WILD HORSES



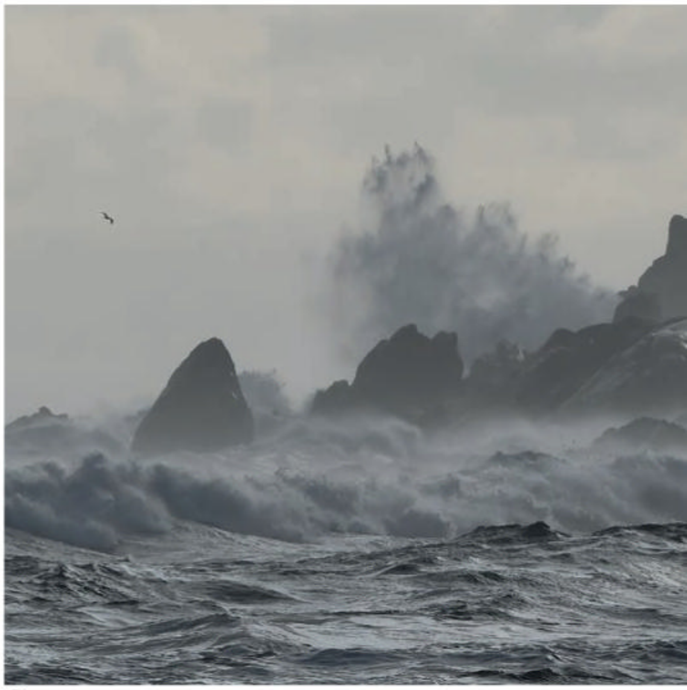
⑦ **JANINE MCIVOR** STORMFRONT RISING



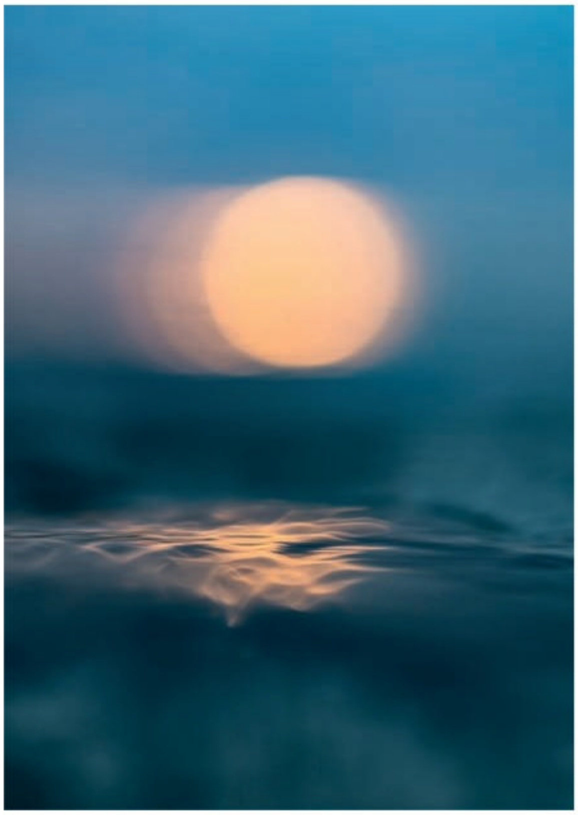
⑧ **JUAN PABLO VASQUEZ** WHATIPU LIGHTHOUSE



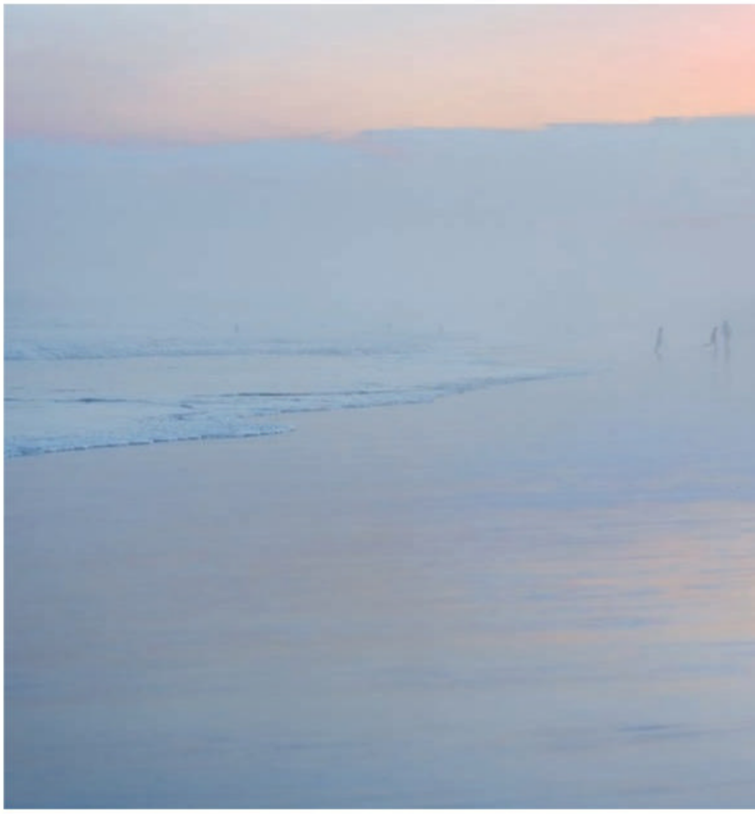
9 **CARL NEHORE** DANCING TREES



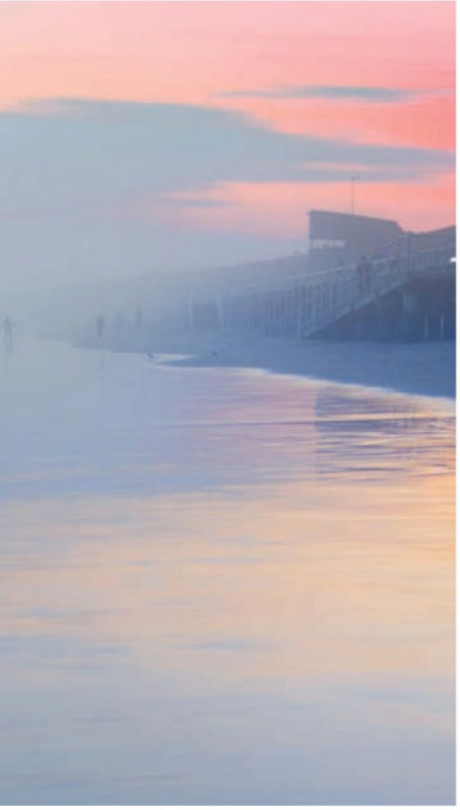
10 **KIRSTIE YOUNG** THE ROARING FORTIES OF TRIAL HARBOUR



12 **JEN WILLIAMS** LAYERS OF SUMMER, LAYERS OF ME - COLLAROY OCEAN SUNRISE

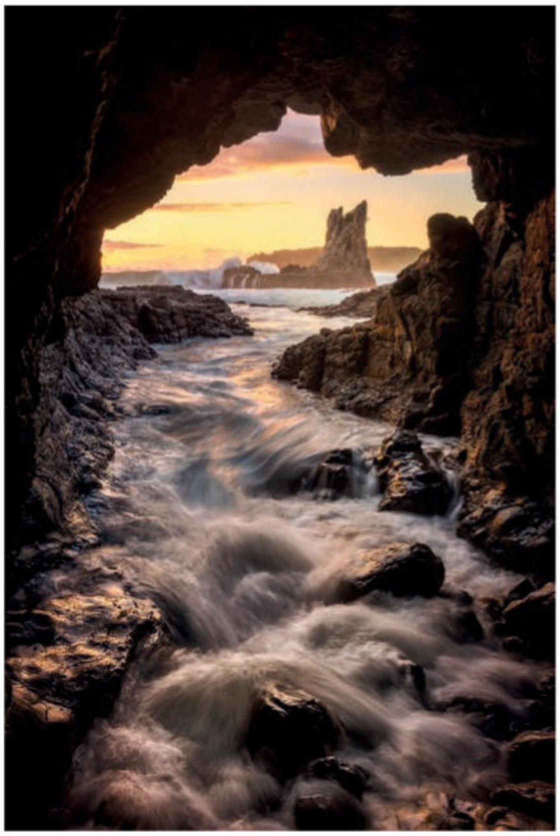


⑪ **THOMAS MARTIN MCSHANE** WIENCKE ISLAND

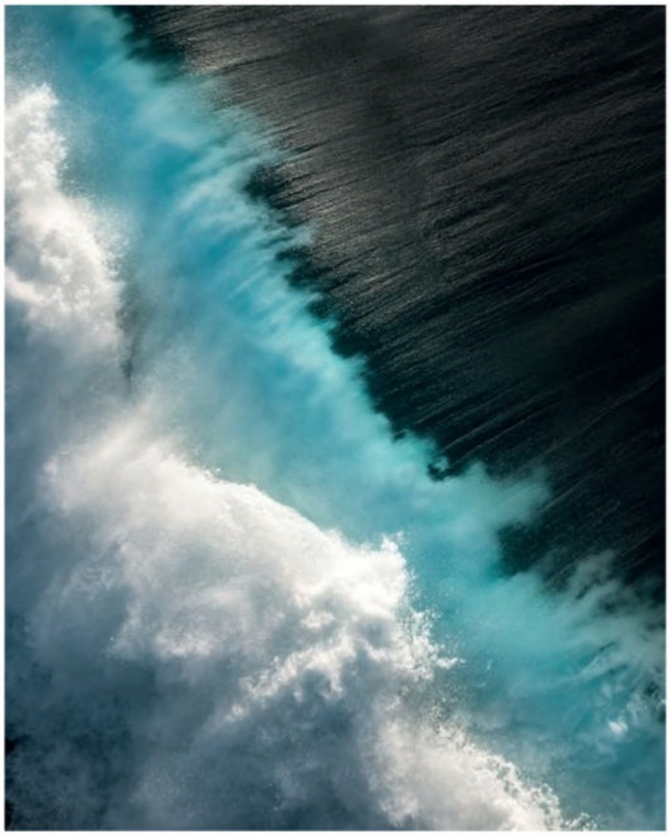


⑬ **KATIE TURNBULL** OCEAN GROVE

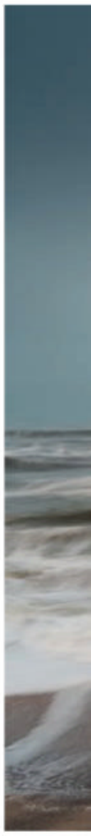
⑭ **GERGO RUGLI** SERAPH'S BRIDGE

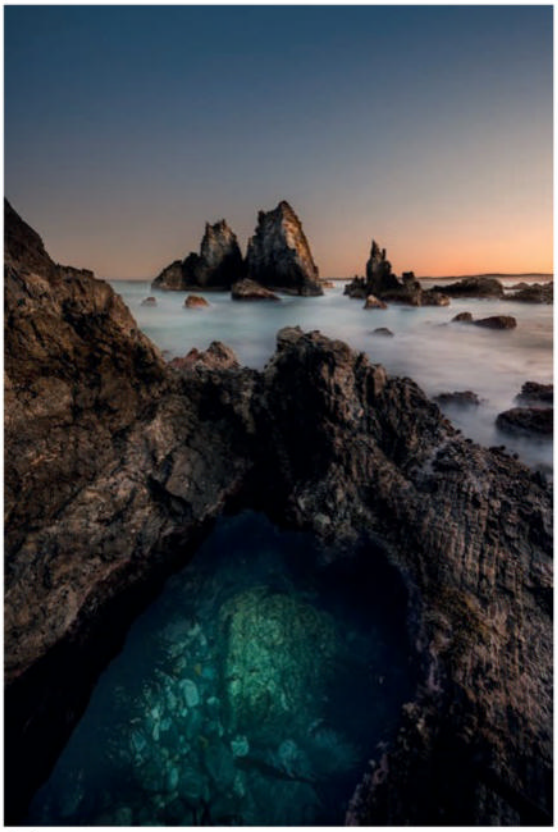


⑮ **GRANT HIGGINSON** THE CAVE

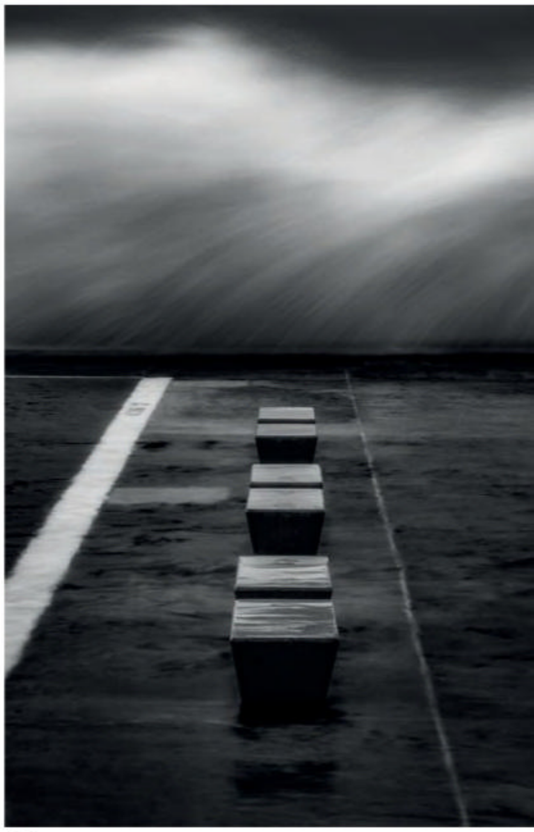


⑯ **TIM BURGESS** FUSION

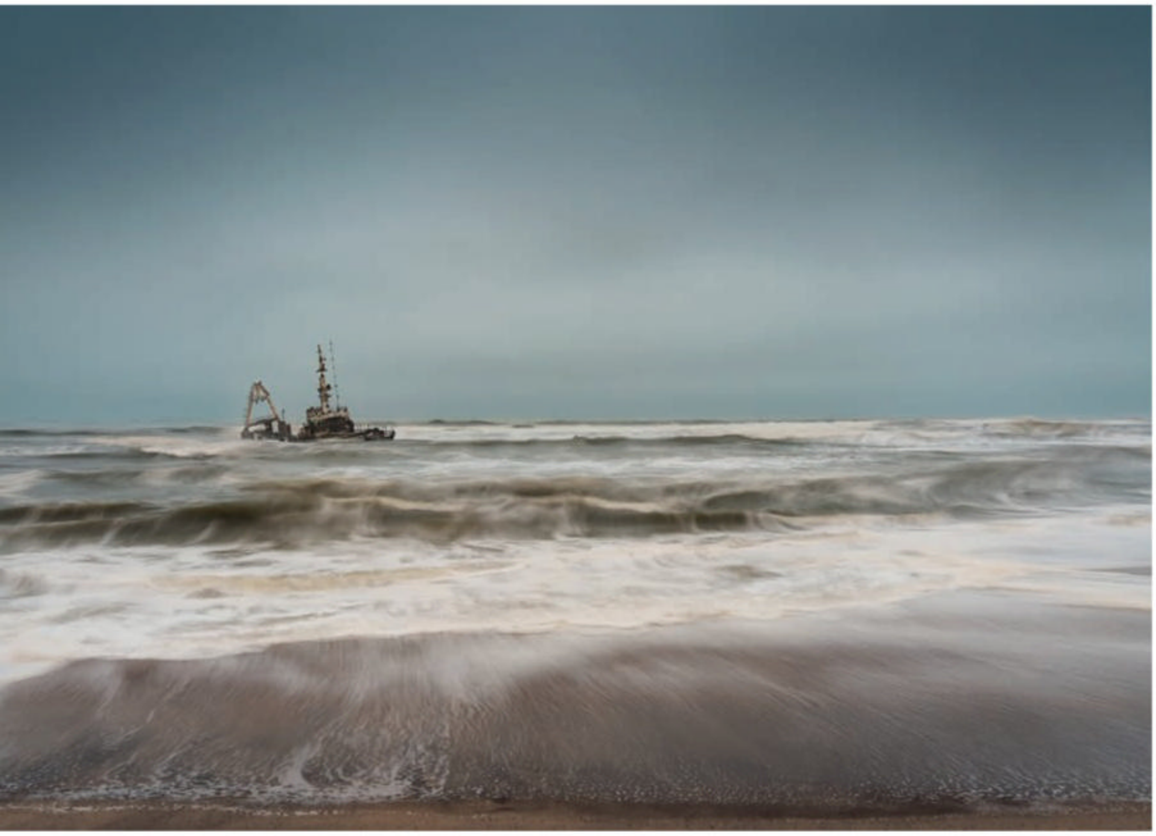




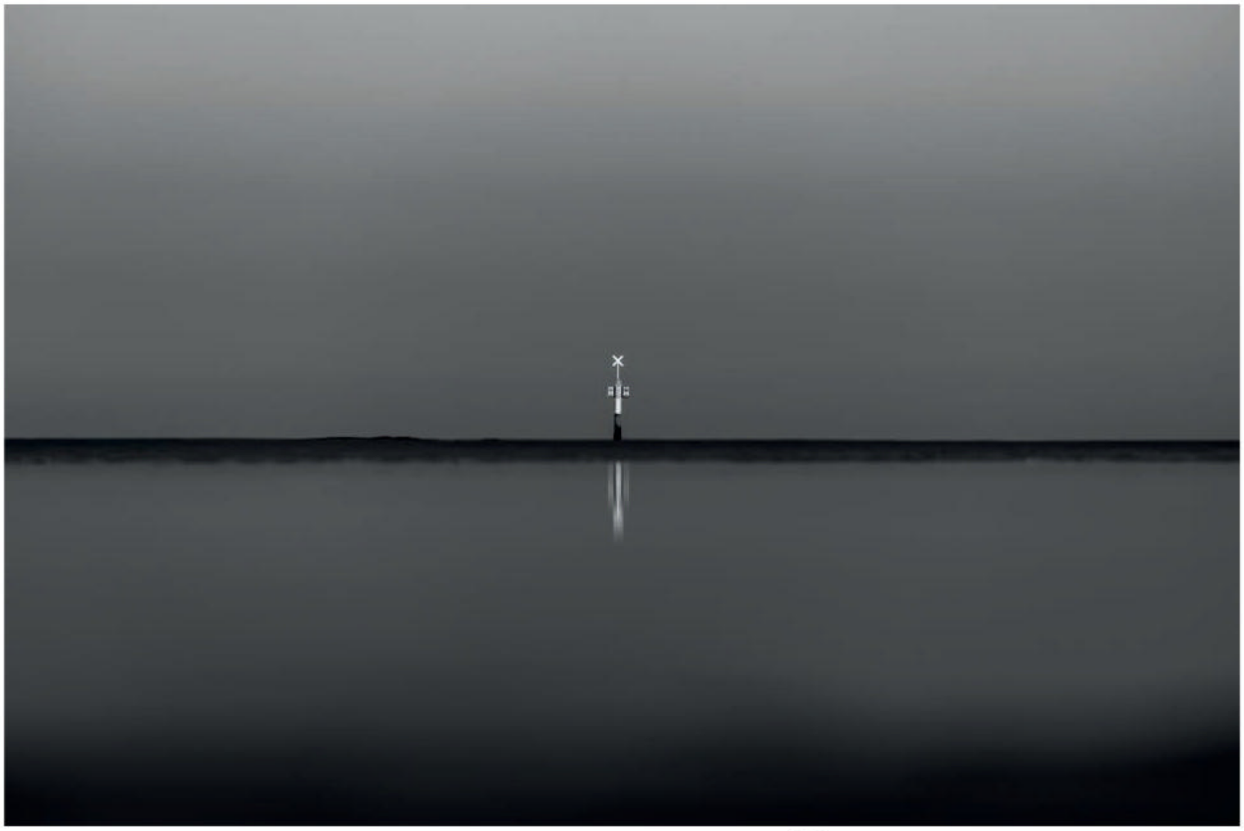
⑱ **BALA KRISHNAN** CAMEL ROCK POOL



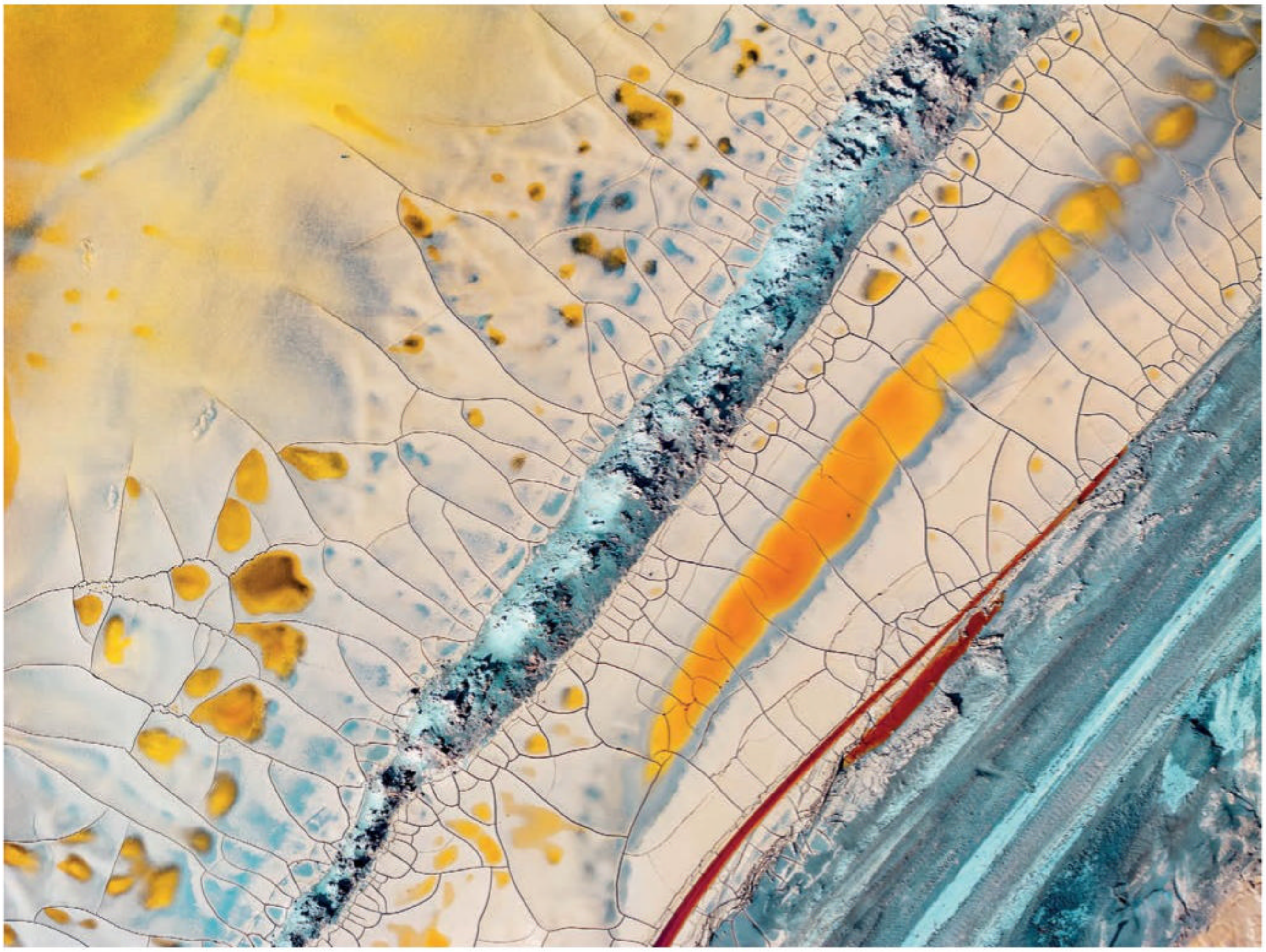
⑲ **GRANT FAULKNER** NO PLACE TO SIT



⑰ **MICHELLE DE SWARDT** SKELETON COAST SHIPWRECK



⑳ **ALLAN CUMMINS** CHANNEL MARKED



WINNER TOM PUTT

Tom Putt is an award-winning Australian landscape photographer renowned for his aerial and fine art imagery. With over 20 years of experience, Tom has also travelled extensively across Australia and the world, capturing the beauty of remote and rugged landscapes from unique perspectives.

Based in Victoria, Tom operates a gallery in Mornington. He is also a passionate educator, who spends much of his time running photography workshops and tours.

@tomputtgallery

***VIBRANT FRACTURES.** The mine sites around Perth, WA provide excellent opportunities to capture stunning abstract aerial images, explains Tom Putt.*

"It was a windy morning when I hovered high above this location, however the sun provided the light I needed to produce the vibrant colours I was looking for."

"From the air, the landscape transformed into an abstract canvas—cracked earth weaving through vivid streaks of ochre, turquoise, and deep rust-red. It felt like I was photographing a surreal painting rather than a piece of the natural world touched by industry. Moments like this remind me how unexpected beauty can emerge from even the most rugged and altered environments," he says.

For the judges, Putt's beautiful abstract landscape captivated in one of the most challenging categories to win.

Prize: Camera House gift card valued at $1,000, WD gift pack valued at $500, and $2,000 cash.

WHAT THE JUDGES SAID

As always there were a lot of great images in this year's aerial section, but Tom Putt's vertical shot of a dry lake was definitely the attention grabber. Its success lies in the strong colour palette, combined with the bold use of diagonals and an amazing amount of detail and texture within the image. Overall, we found this to be a remarkable image and a deserving winner of the aerial category. **Anthony McKee**

This breathtaking top down shot showcases the stunning colours and intricate textures of our planet from a whole new perspective. The delicate patterns draw the eye in, while the vibrant pops of colour make it feel like a natural masterpiece—one you could admire for hours. **Steph Vella**

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AUSTRALIAN CONSERVATION FOUNDATION

RUNNER-UP JULIE KENNY

Julie Kenny says she honed her photographic skills in analogue-based film photography, utilising 35mm, medium and large format cameras during her tertiary studies. Later, the Perth-based photographer merged her knowledge of the traditional photographic mediums with new technologies, gaining a commercial drone license. Since this undertaking her work has strongly focused on highlighting the beauty of regional locations.

Growing up in a number of outback towns developed her love of exploring landscapes, strong cups of tea and a good chinwag.

One of Julie's favourite pastimes is travelling to distant places, soaking up cultural experiences and exploring new spaces. Always keen for a road trip adventure, Julie regularly returns to her roots, exploring her own backyard, 'wandering out yonder' in the diverse landscapes of Western Australia.

@juliet.romeo.kilo

SEEDING. *Julie Kenny's graphically gorgeous Aerial category runner-up winning image Seeding reveals an aerial view of the seeding process, which documents the strong contrast between the dry and freshly ploughed earth.*

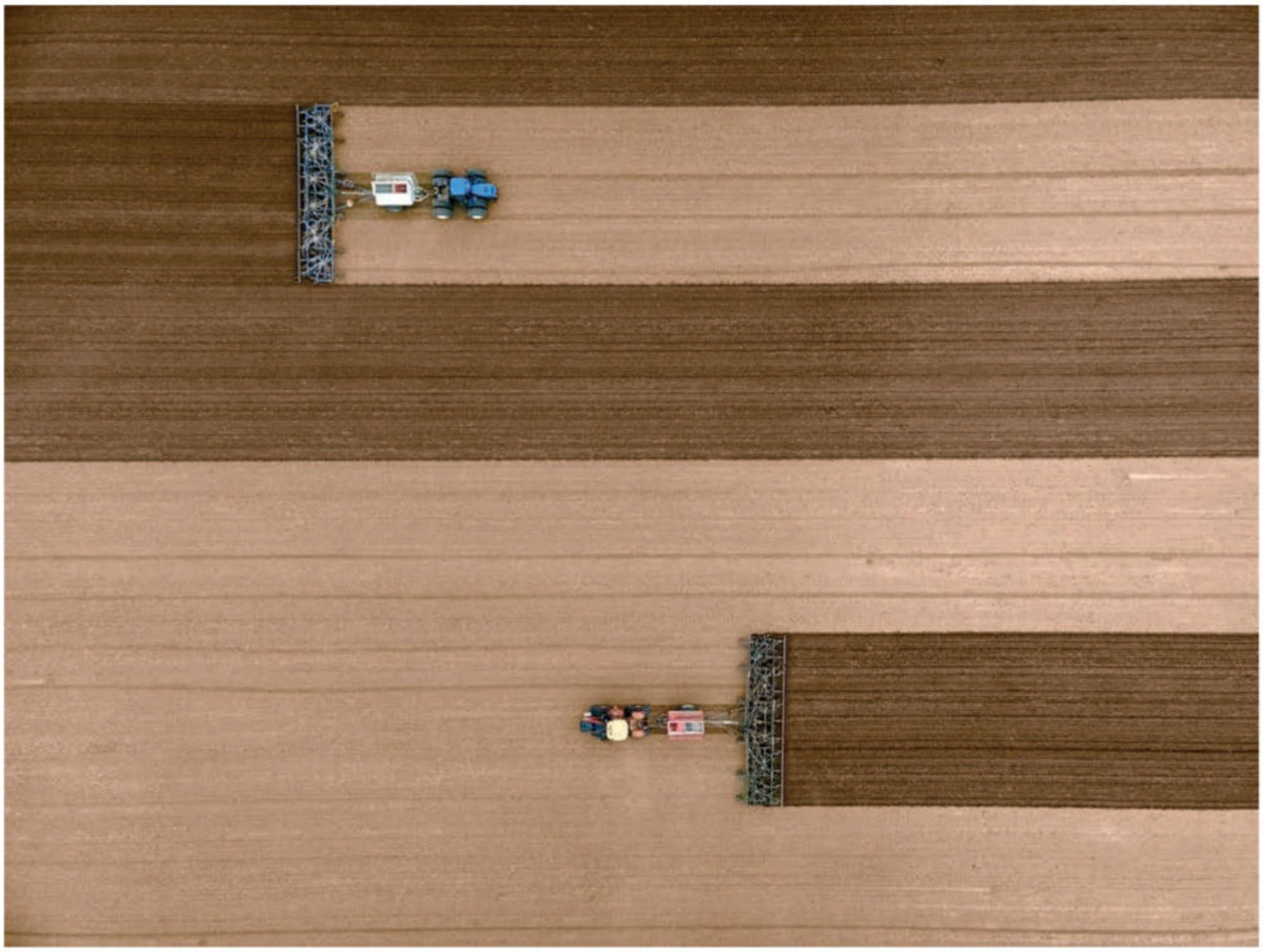
At the same time, the alignment of horizontal lines highlights the precision of modern farming machinery. The result is an image captured with technical precision and a sense of visual symmetry that impressed our judges.

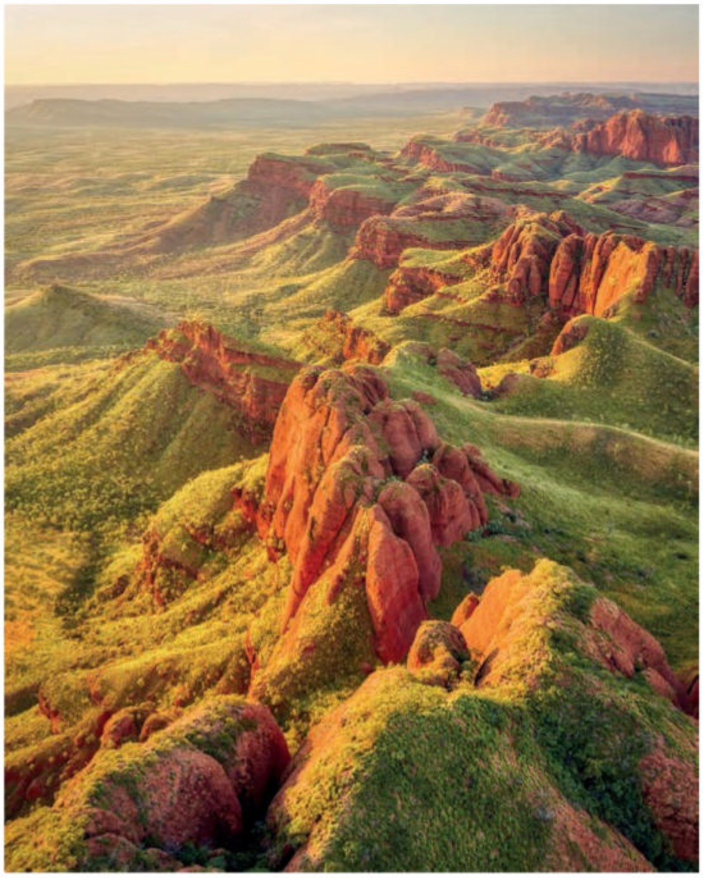
Prize: $500 Camera House gift card, WD gift pack valued at $250.

WHAT THE JUDGES SAID

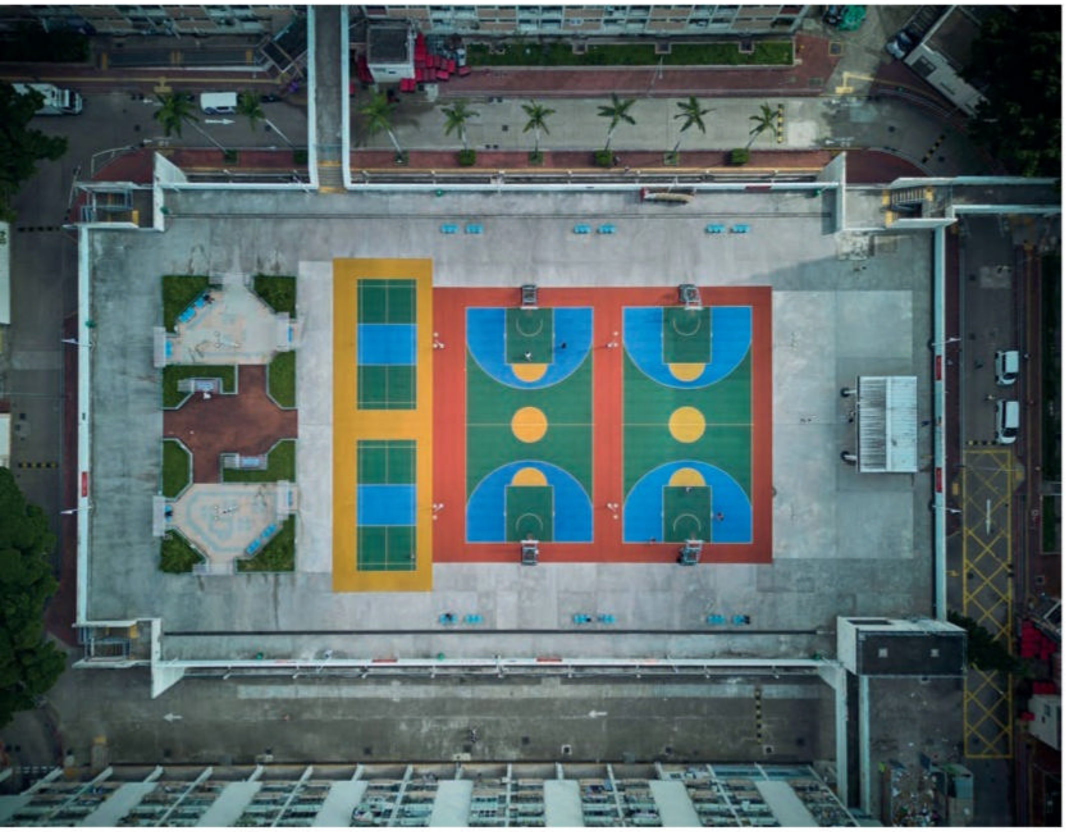
This image stood out in the Aerial category because it captures the quiet yet immense impact of human intervention on the land. The aerial perspective strips away the familiarity of farming and transforms it into a study of pattern, texture and asymmetry. It turns the mundane into something abstract. There's a tension between control and necessity in this image. The structured precision of agriculture with alternating bands in the soil creates a visual rhythm that speaks to our relationship with the environment—one of manipulation, adaptation and dependence. It is a reminder of the power that we wield over Earth and the way that we shape it to sustain us. **Serena Dzenis**

This image is all about simplicity, symmetry and balance, and shooting from above makes it even stronger. The lines and placement of the tractors are great. Its composition reminds me of the yin and yang symbol. **Ignacio Palacios**

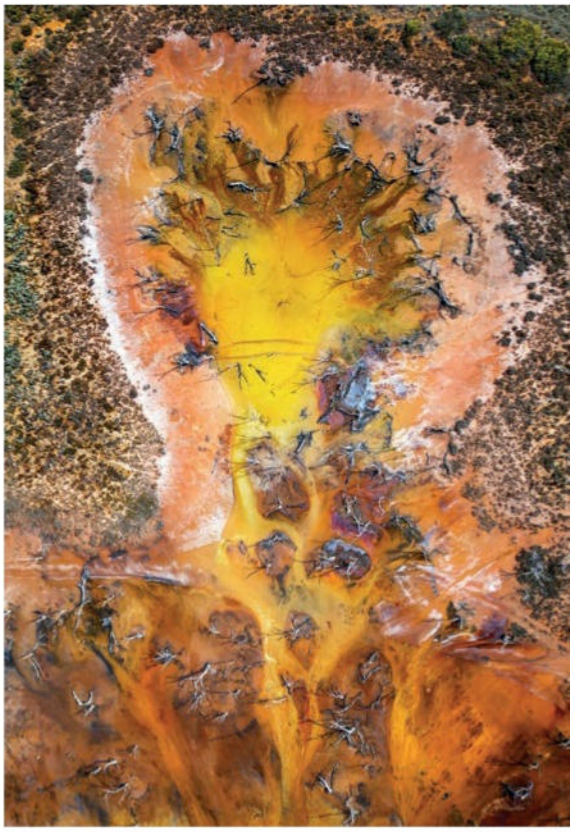




3 **SCOTT LEGGO** CLASSIC KIMBERLEY

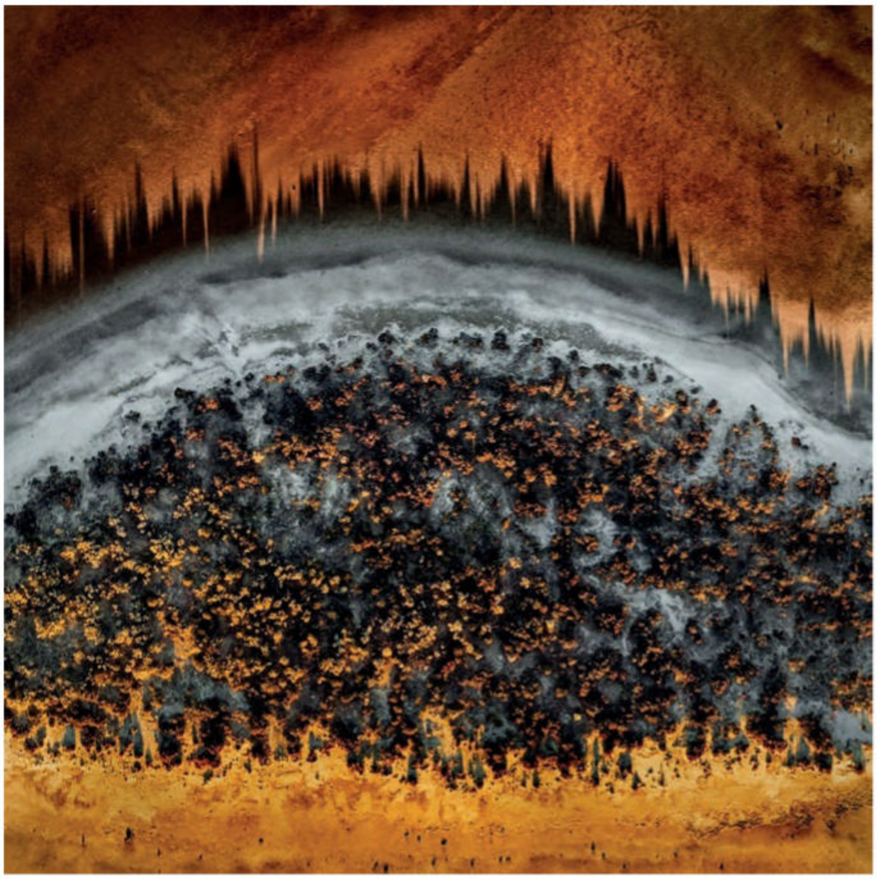


6 **JEREMY GRAHAM** BASKETBALL COURTS

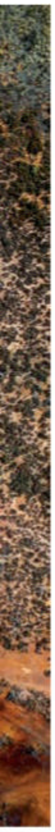


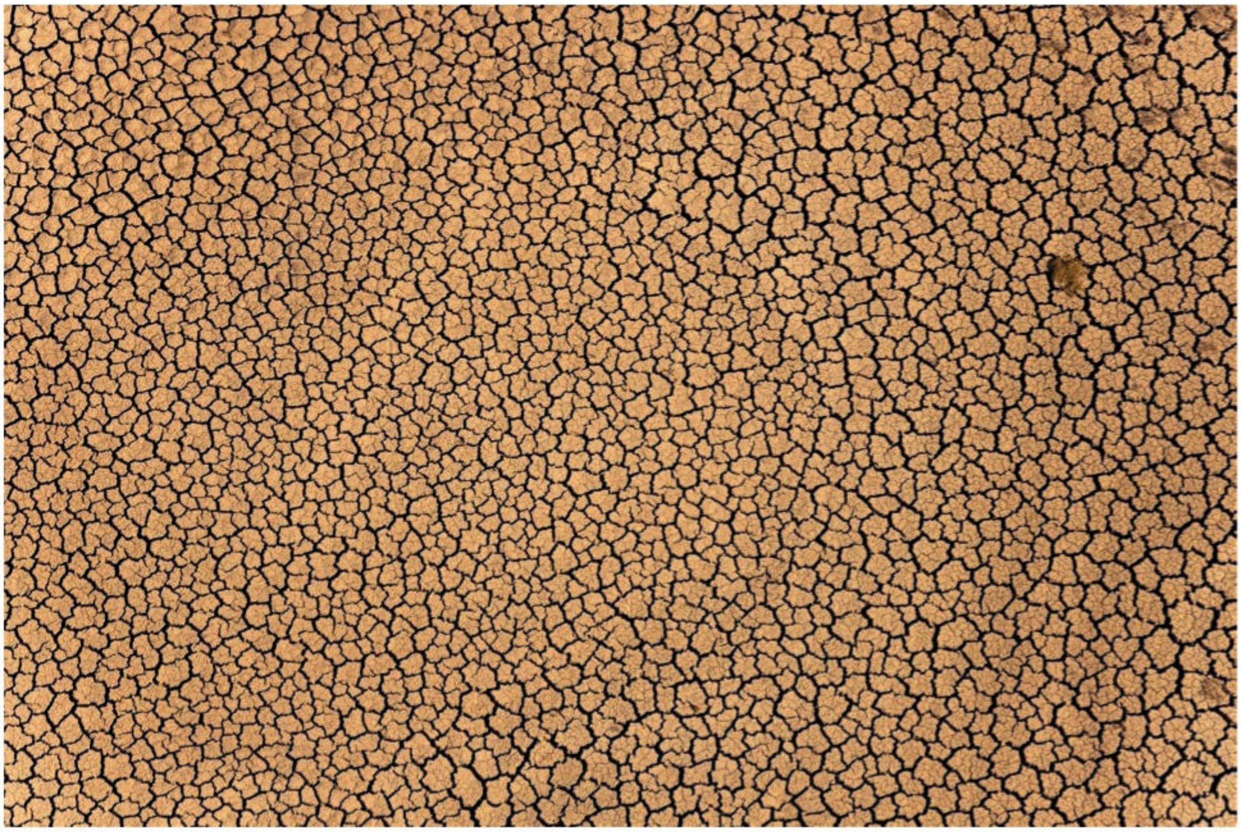
7 **NILMINI DE SILVA** PARCHED LANDSCAPE

4 **NILMINI DE SILVA** SALTED DOUGHNUTS

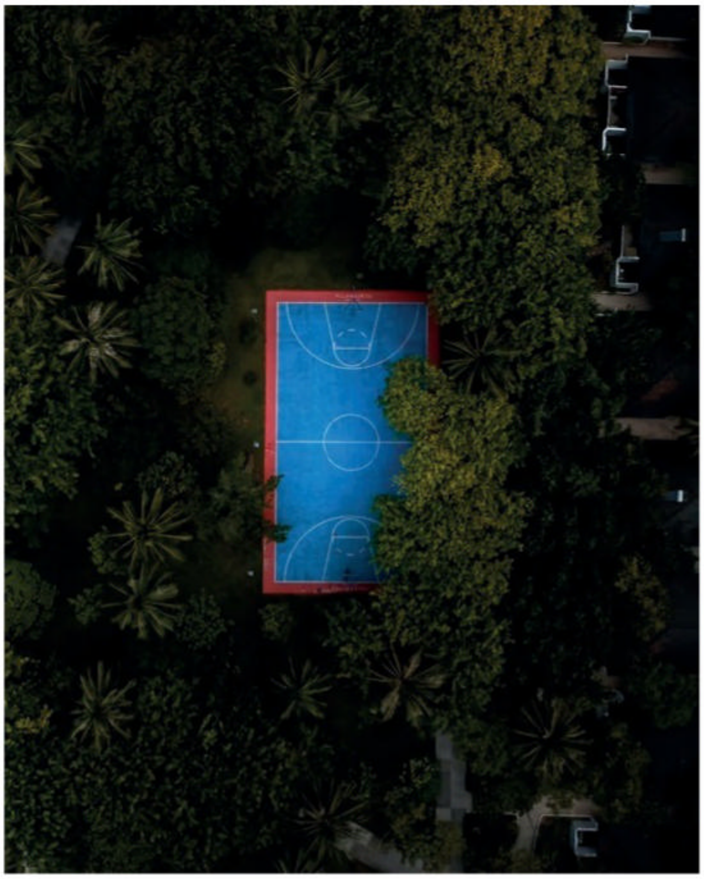


5 **NILMINI DE SILVA** SALT, SUNRISE AND SHADOWS

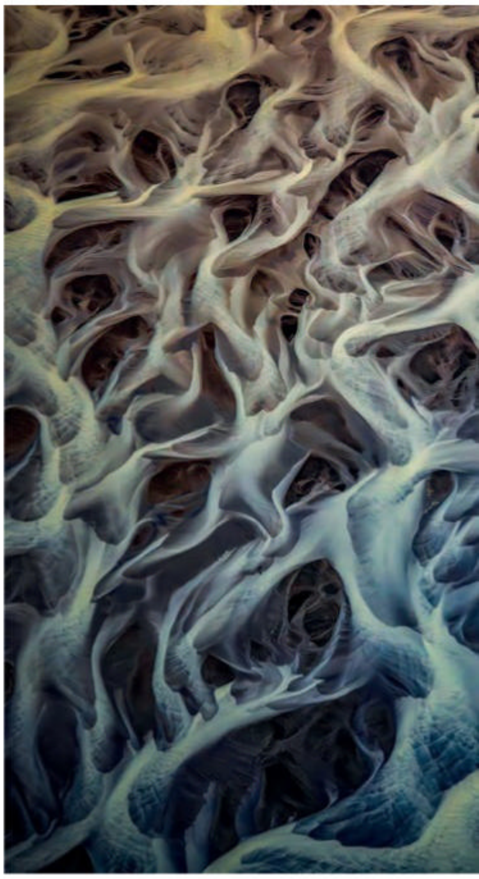




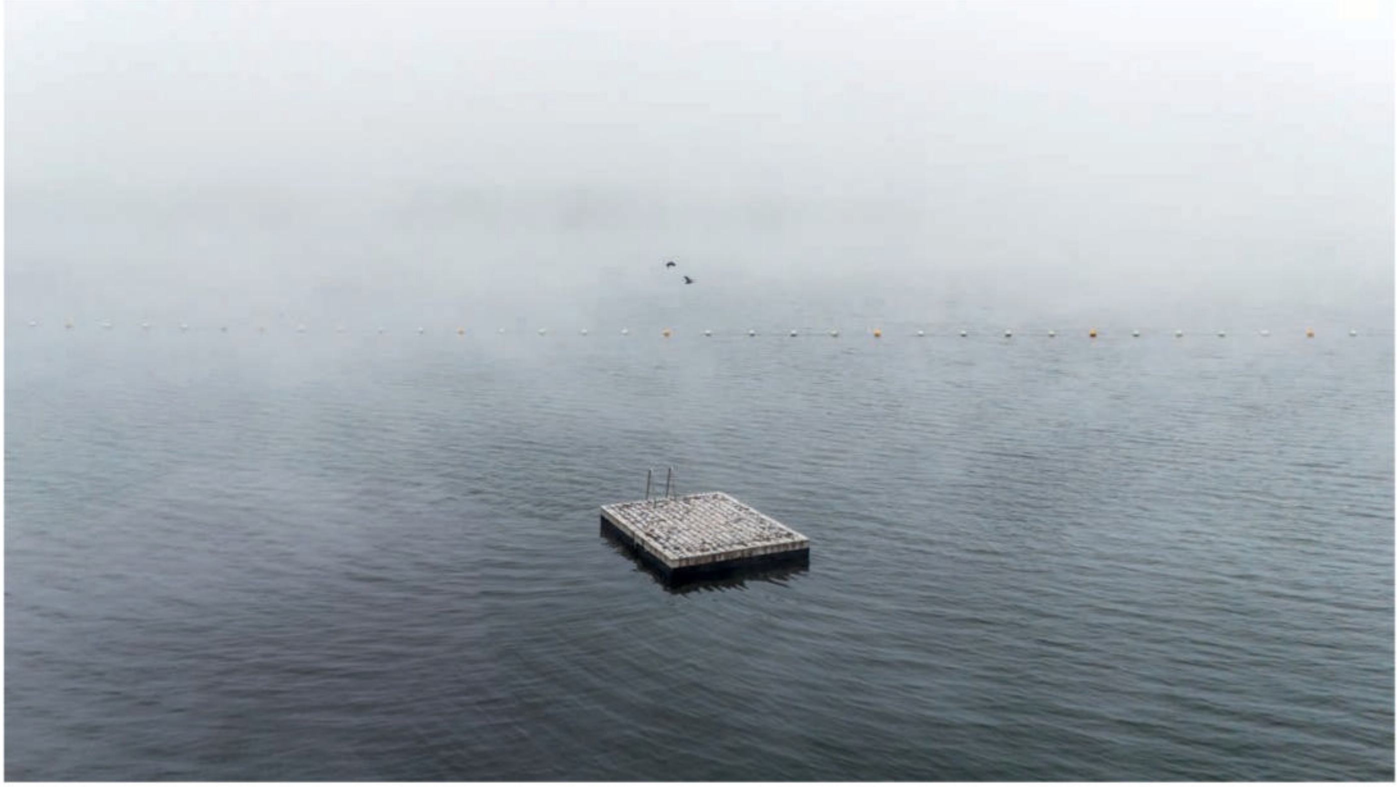
8 **KAREN NOMIKOS** NAMIB DESERT



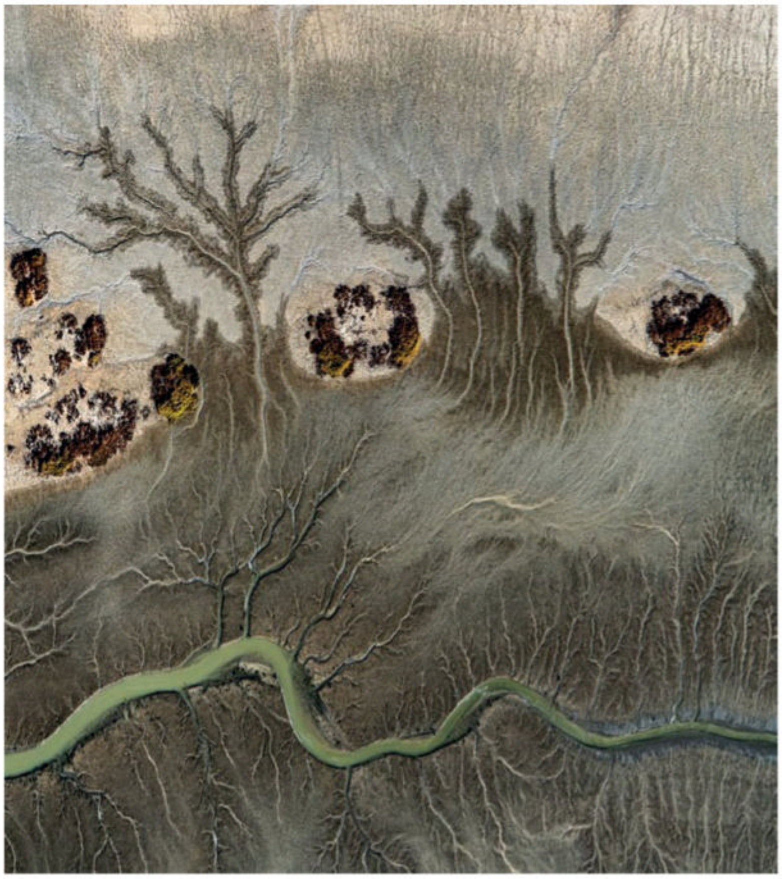
⑨ **TIM BURGESS** JUNGLE BALL



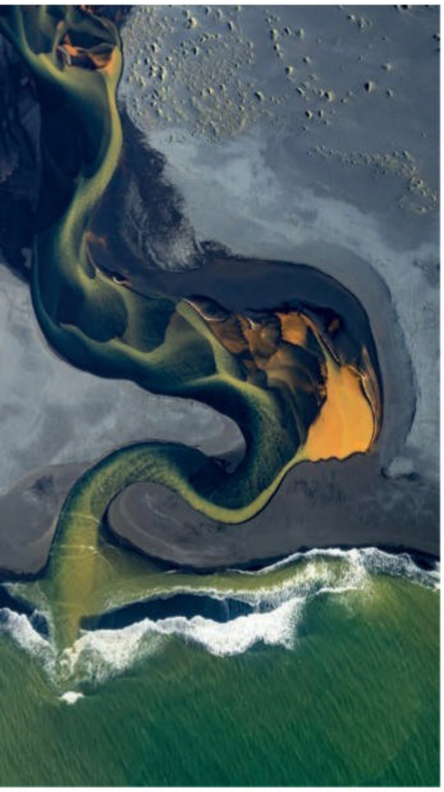
⑩ **PAUL HOELEN** INTERLOCKED



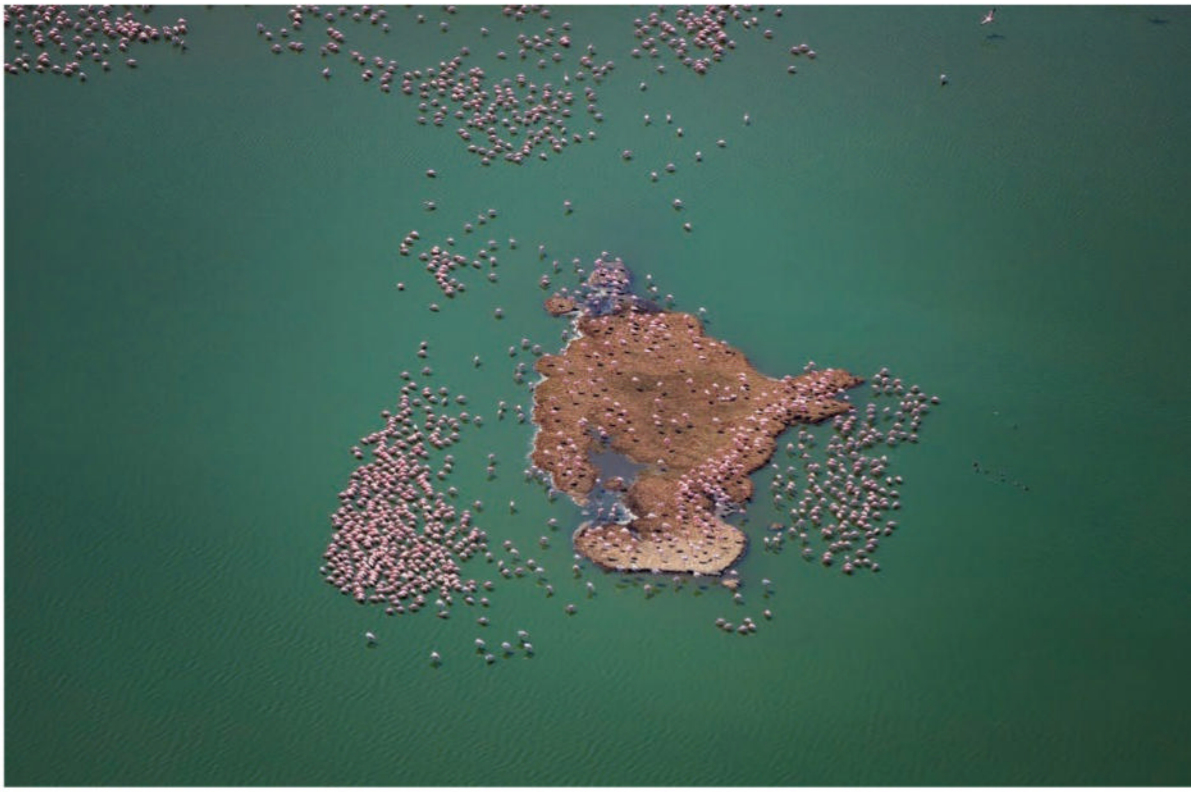
⑫ **DAVE HAYES** ADRIFT



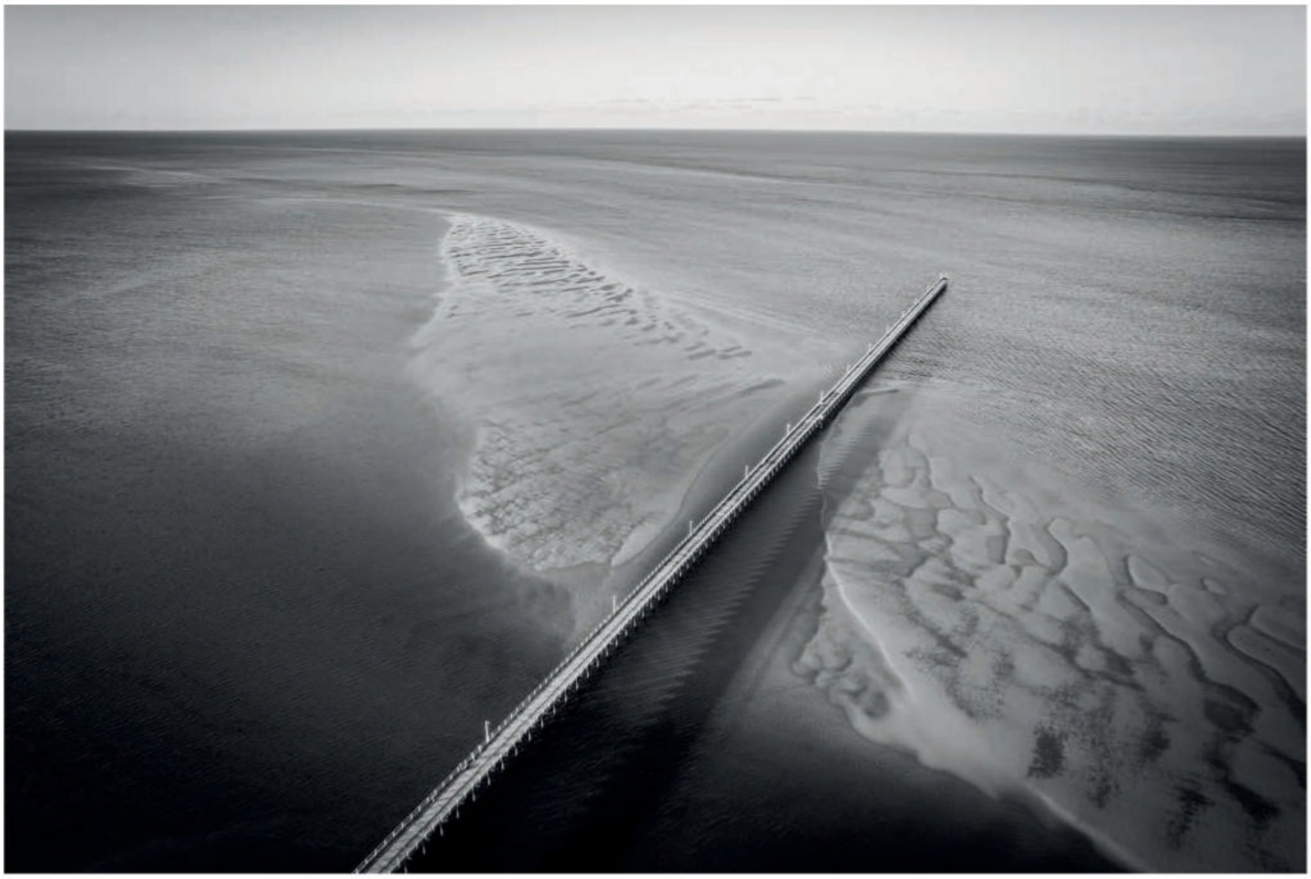
⑪ **POLLY FENTON** TEXTURES OF THE GULF



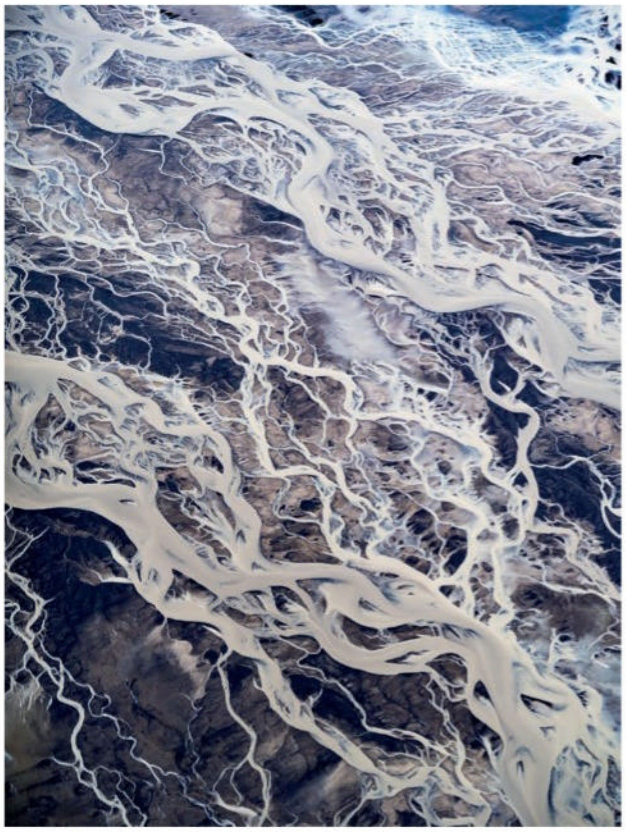
⑬ **JACKIE WILSON** THE SERPENT



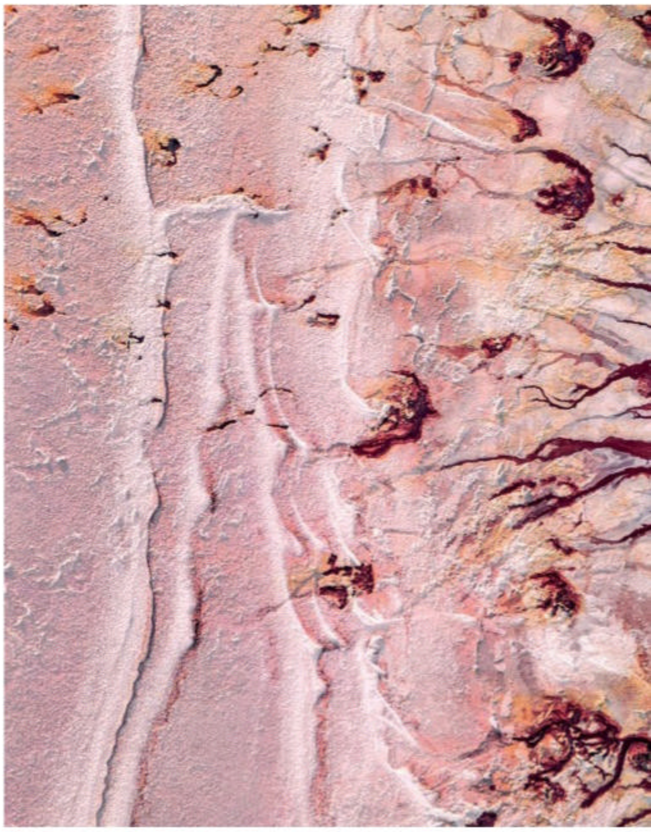
⑭ **KAREN NOMIKOS** FLAMINGOS EVERYWHERE



15 **RYAN TUTOR** SEA WINGS



18 **TOM PUTT** NATURE'S ART

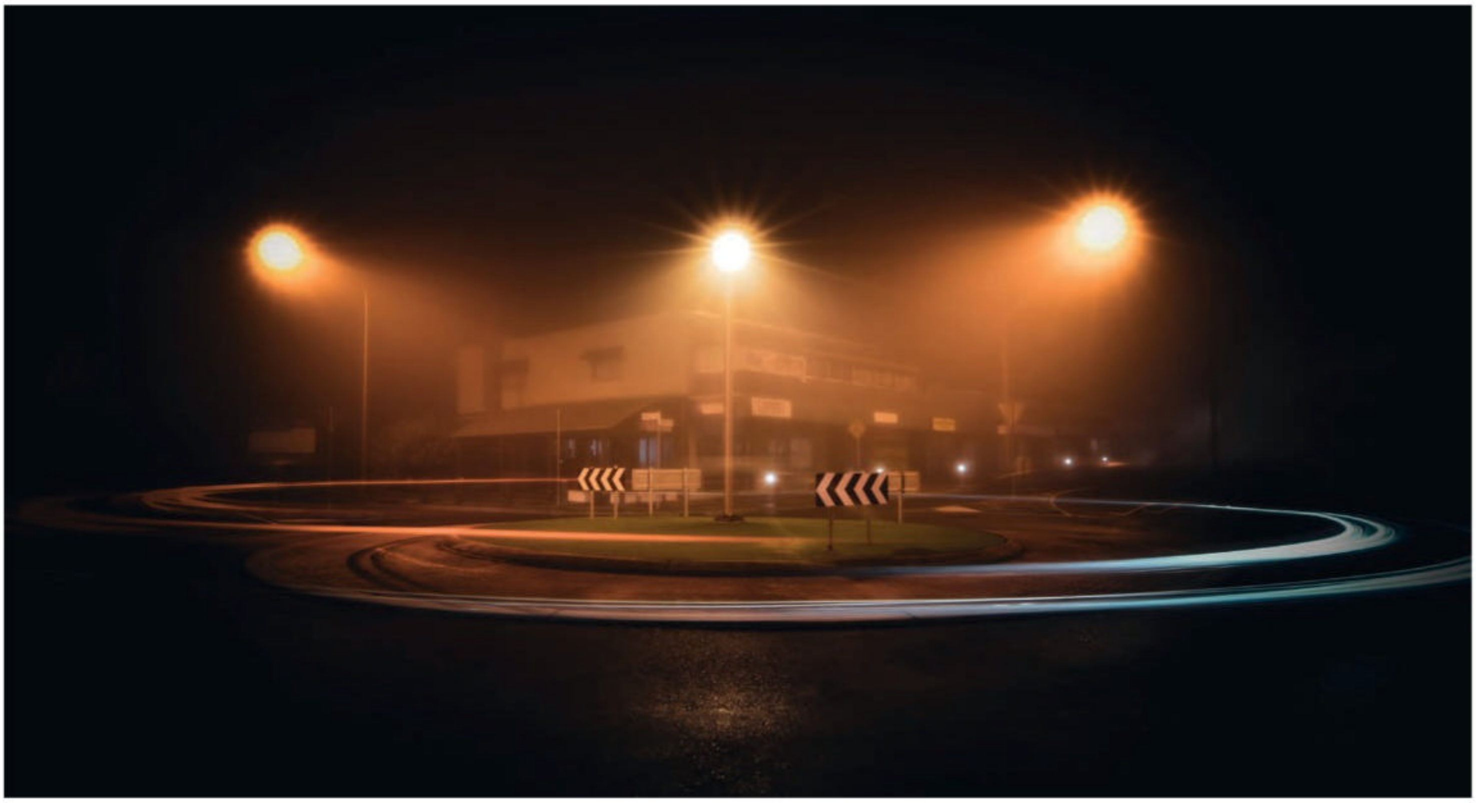


19 **NILMINI DE SILVA** GHOSTLY DANCE

⑯ **TOM PUTT** DREAMY FLOW

⑰ **SCOTT LEGGO** TIDAL ORCHID

⑳ **SIMON RAY** RUST



WINNER RYAN TUTOR

Based in Hervey Bay, Queensland, self-taught photographer Ryan Tutor is drawn to landscapes and nature. He describes his photography as "part adventure, part daydream"—a way of capturing the world as he sees it, or as he wishes it could be.

"I thrive on capturing the mood of the moment, wherever the light takes me and whenever it feels right," he says.

Along for the ride is his overstuffed camera bag, packed with three lenses, a DSLR, and a drone. "With each adventure, I'm usually ready for whatever comes my way—plus, I get a workout in the process. Bonus!"

@ryan2tor

GOING IN CIRCLES. On a rare foggy evening in Hervey Bay, Ryan Tutor spotted a roundabout that caught his eye.

"I had a long exposure shot in mind that I'd been wanting to try, and these conditions felt perfect to finally make it happen," he explains.

With his tripod set up and a 20-second exposure ready, he waited for the right moment—just enough passing traffic to bring the scene to life. After a few attempts, he captured a shot full of atmosphere and mood—one that went on to impress the judges.

Prize: Camera House gift card valued at $1,000, WD gift pack valued at $500, and $2,000 cash.

WHAT THE JUDGES SAID

Ryan Tutor's photograph of a rural roundabout at night was a clear favourite for the judges in the urban section. The soft mist combined with the effects of the lights on the scene, and the lights of a car or two passing by evoke some emotion from the viewer (most of us know the feeling of being the last car on the road on a cold night). In all, the design, composition and tonal handling of the image have resulted in a very subtle and lasting image. **Anthony McKee**

I really enjoyed the approach taken with this image. The simplicity of the urban setting, combined with the effective use of dark space, results in a strong and bold photograph. The use of light trails to convey movement, paired with the moody lighting and an atmosphere that almost feels fog-like, was a perfect creative choice. It all comes together to create a striking and evocative image. **Petra Leary**

RUNNER-UP DARREN PATTERSON

Based in Christchurch, New Zealand, Darren Patterson describes himself as a photographer who just does it for fun.

@darrenspatterson

THE SHELTER OF DREAMS. *Darren Patterson's Urban category runner-up winning image The shelter of dreams was captured on a stopover in Los Angeles when he was staying in Anaheim to visit Disneyland with his sons.*

"In the mornings, we'd walk to the local supermarket and grab some bagels for breakfast. On the way we would walk past this bus shelter that had a homeless person sleeping under it. It was just such a powerful image. The world too busy, passing them by, while the lights of the shelter highlighted their isolation," he says.

"I went back the following morning to photograph the scene. They were there, in the same place, like they hadn't moved. I took many photos but the one I finally chose had two people waiting for a bus, on their phones, not invading the space, just carrying on with their lives."

"I think the power of the image is increased by where it was captured," he says.

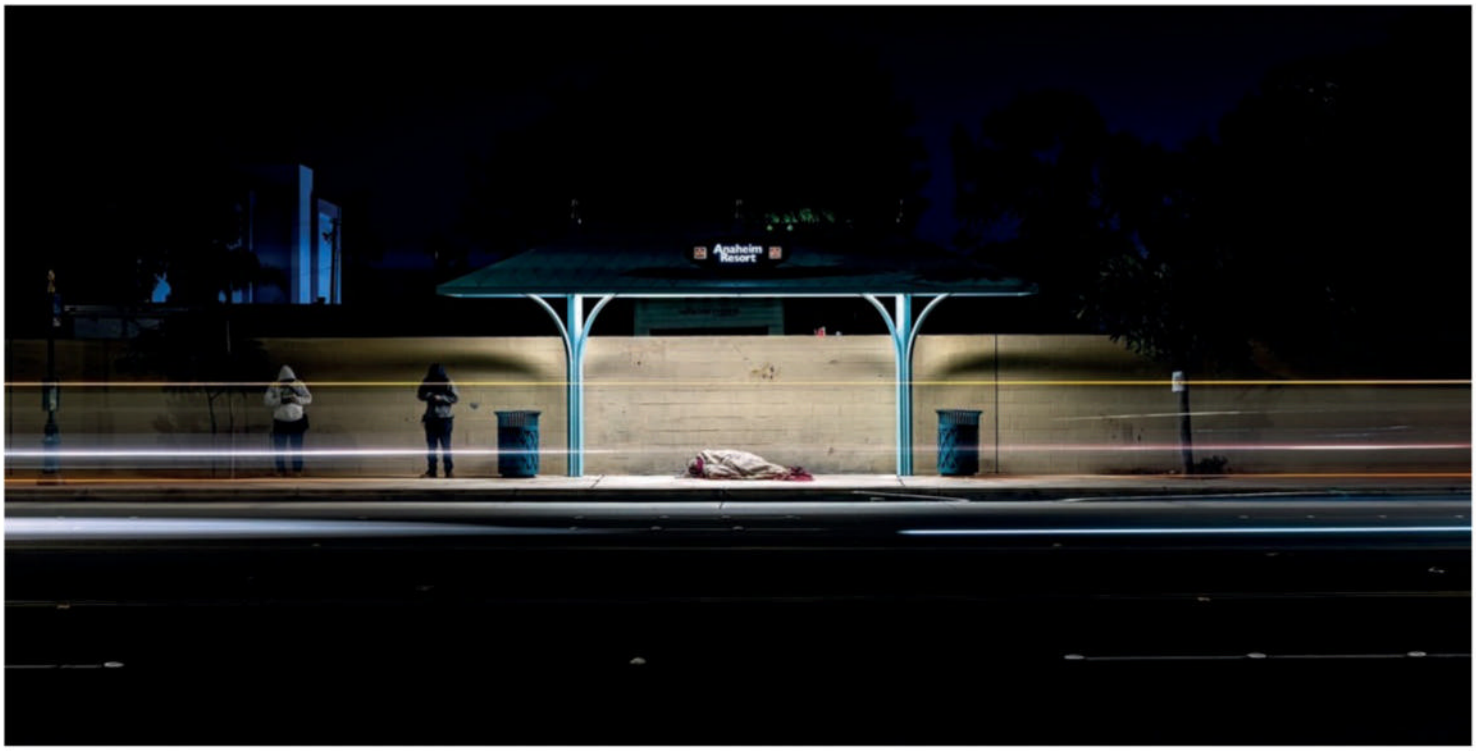
"Someone who has little, sleeping rough, just a short distance from the entrance to an amusement park. A juxtaposition of affluence and poverty."

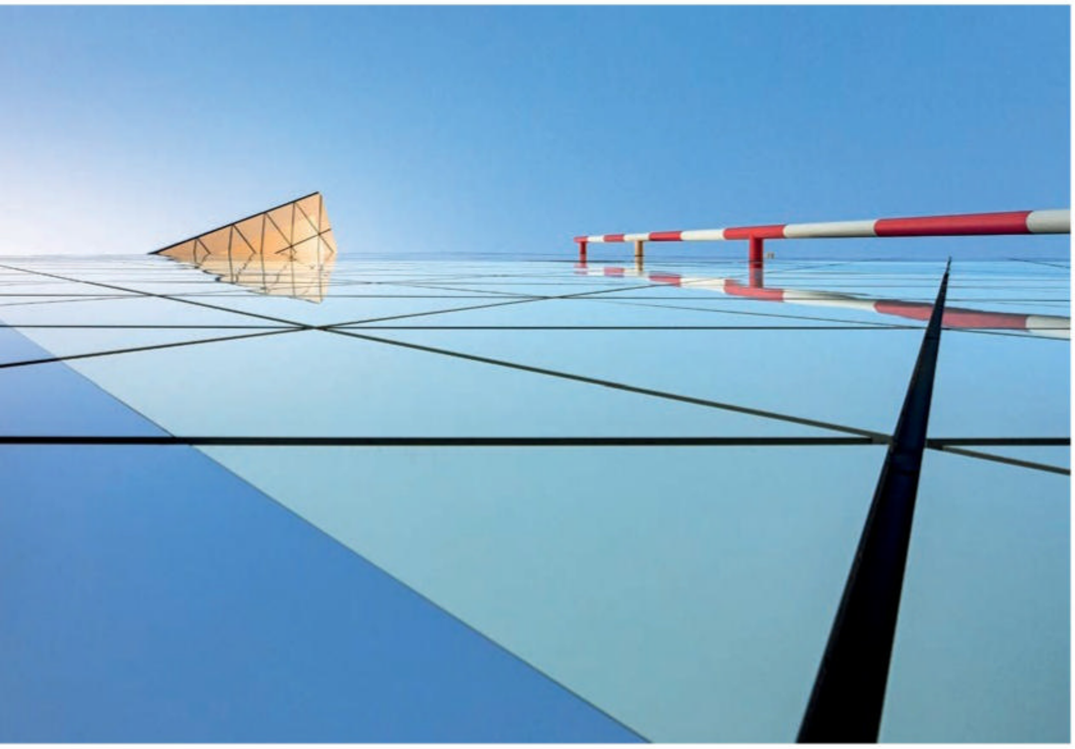
Prize: $500 Camera House gift card, WD gift pack valued at $250.

WHAT THE JUDGES SAID

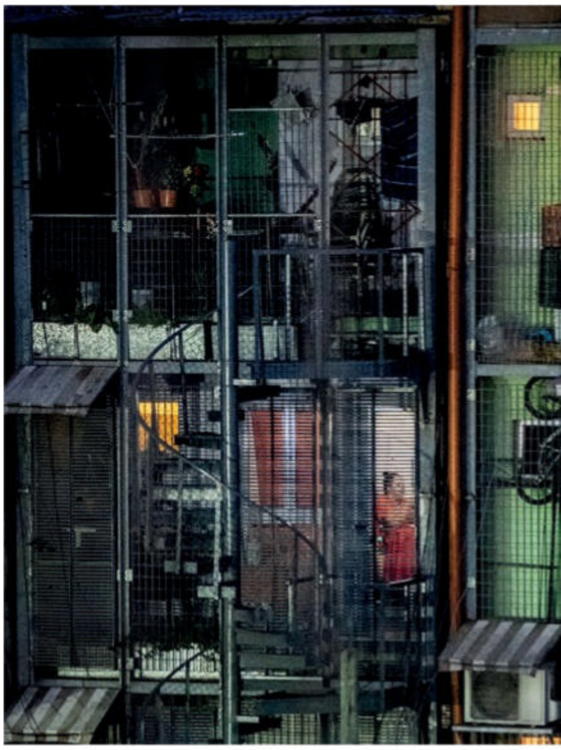
Darren's image carries a powerful narrative. It's been very well observed, thoughtfully composed, and carefully executed with plenty of subtle details and contrasts to explore. The light trails from the vehicles add a dynamic and striking touch, enhancing the overall mood of the scene. **Ignacio Palacios**

Darren has done a great job of storytelling with his image the Shelter of Dreams, making for a well composed and exposed image. The low light along the edges helps lead the eye to the main focal point of the figures and we have some nice subtle colours and light in various background elements which help add depth and context. The long exposure streaking the lights really caps off the image with a sense of movement and splash of colour. Great work. **Will Patino**

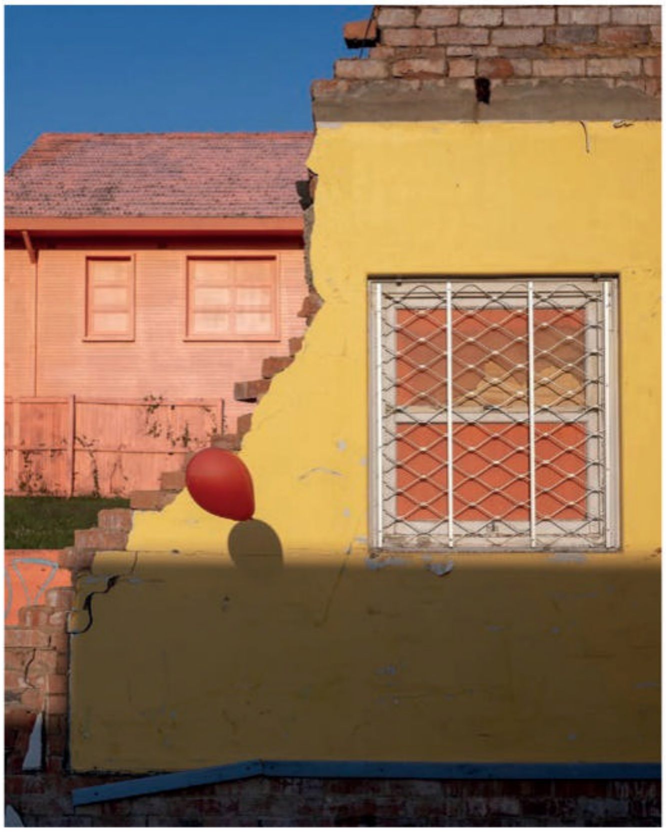




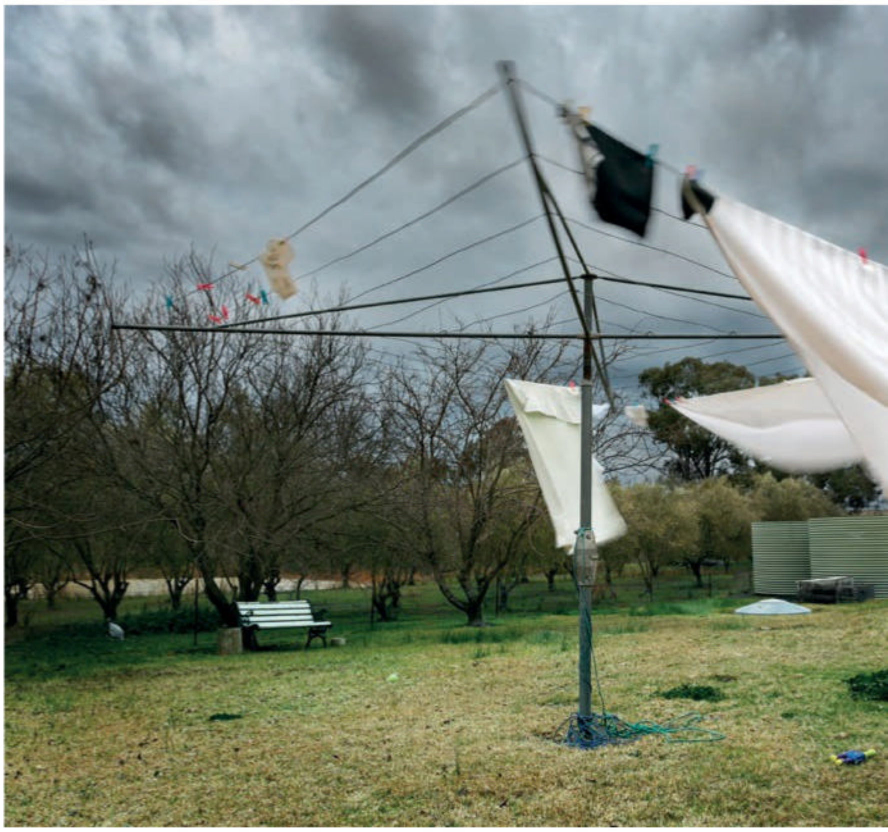
③ **LIZ BARKER** ARENA



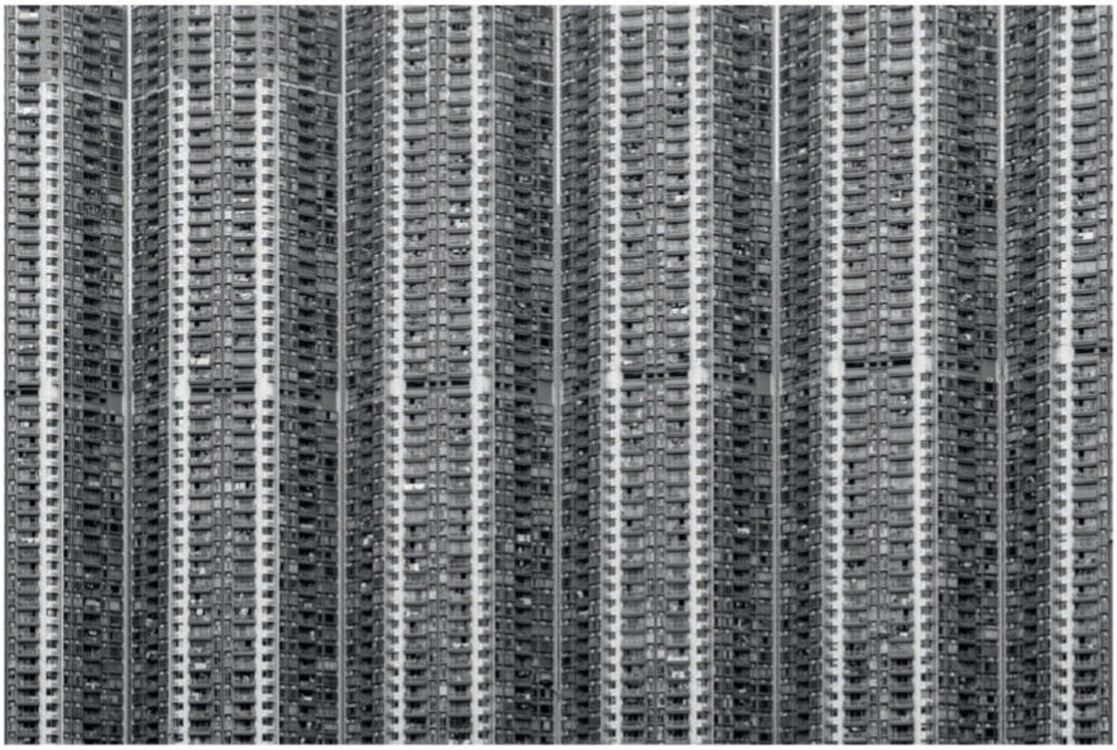
④ **JACKIE WILSON** DOING IT TOUGH



⑥ **DANE BEESLEY** BALLOON ON BROKEN WALL

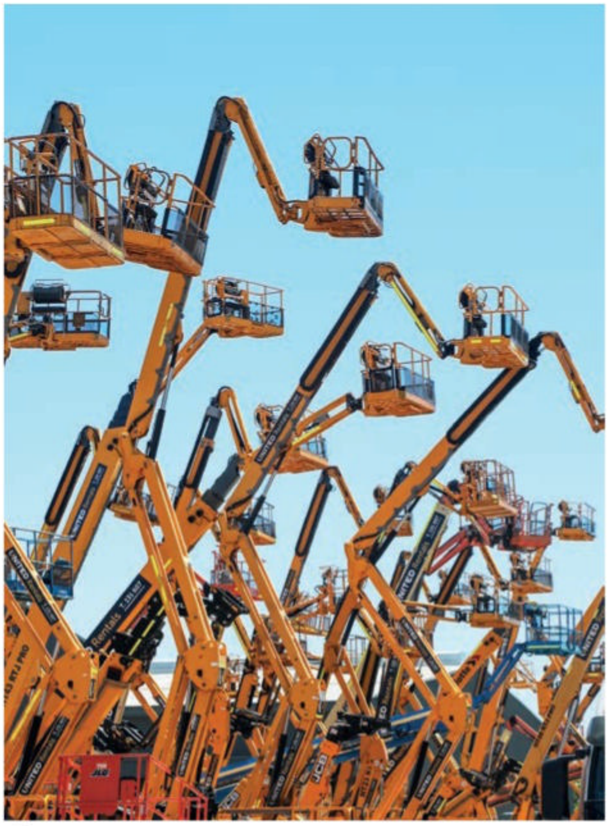


⑦ **JULIE SPENCER** BRING THE WASHING IN

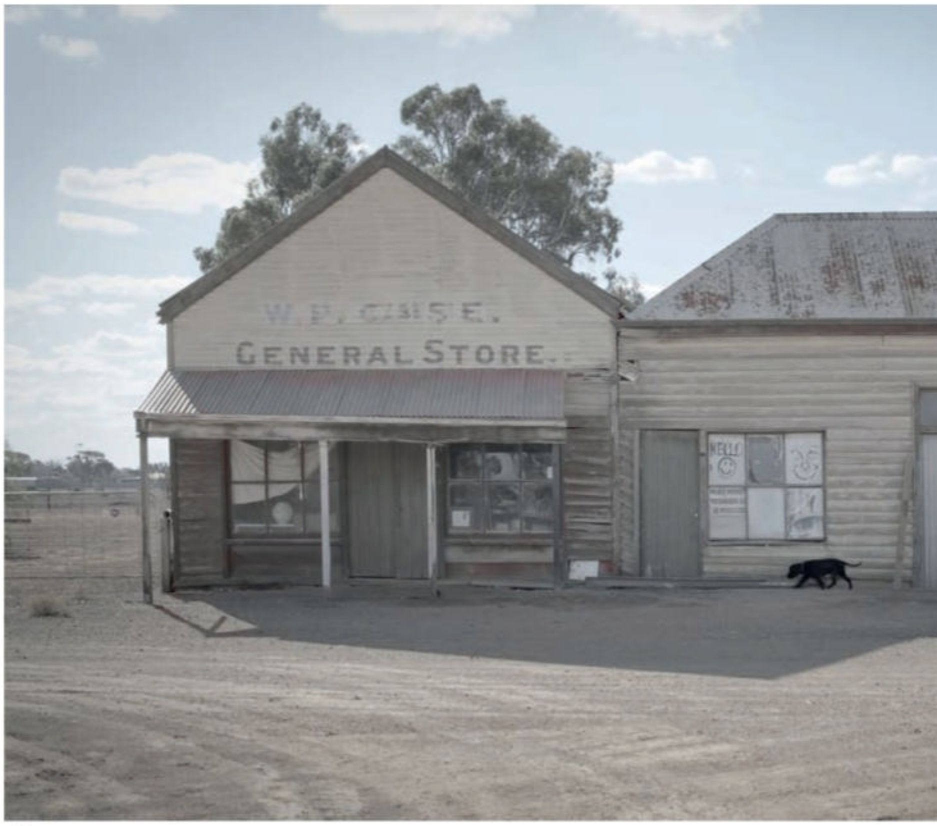


5 **KATHERINE GRIFFITHS** URBAN TAPESTRY

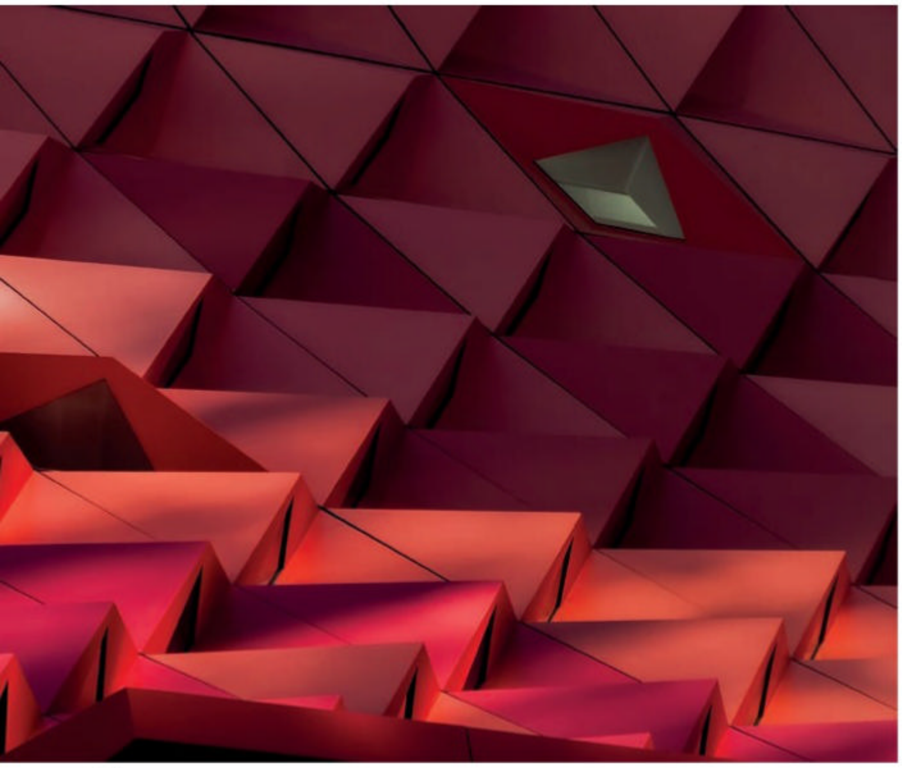
8 **BENJAMIN HAMS** THUNDERSTRUCK WALLAROO



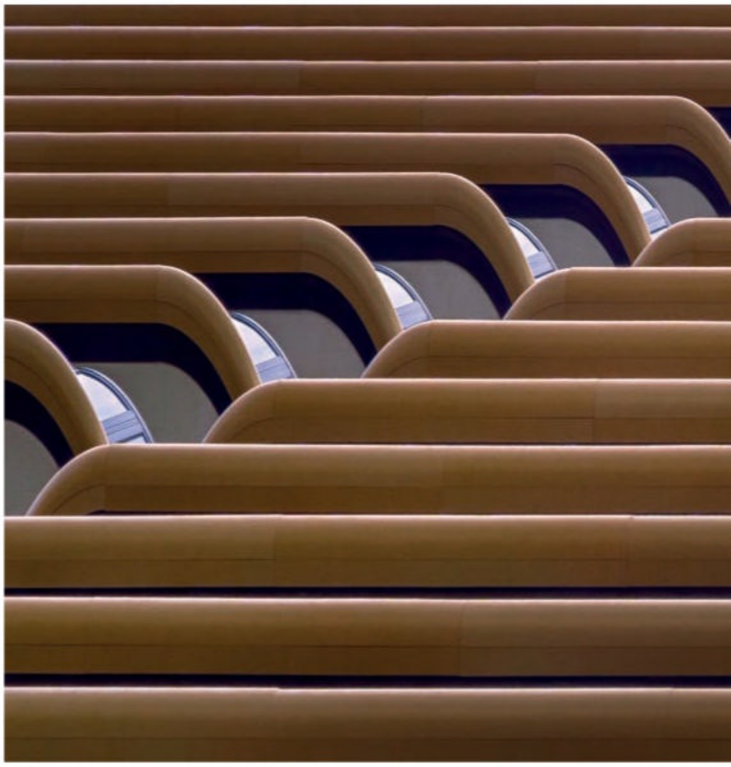
9 **PAT MARTIN** RIOT OF THE CHERRY PICKERS



10 **TRACY LEES** THE GENERAL STORE

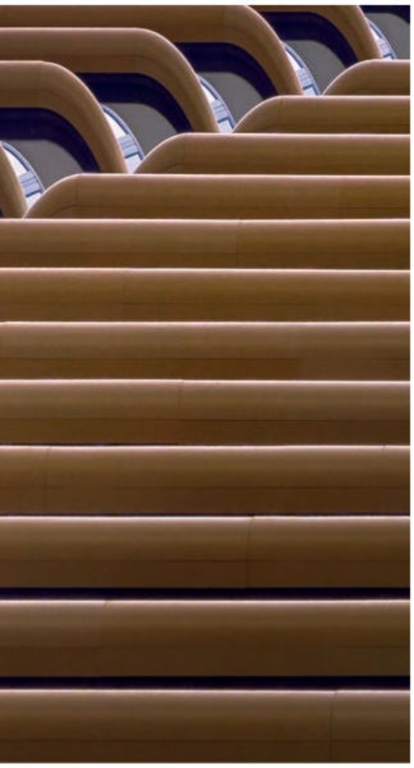


12 **ALAN COLIGADO** PHIVE

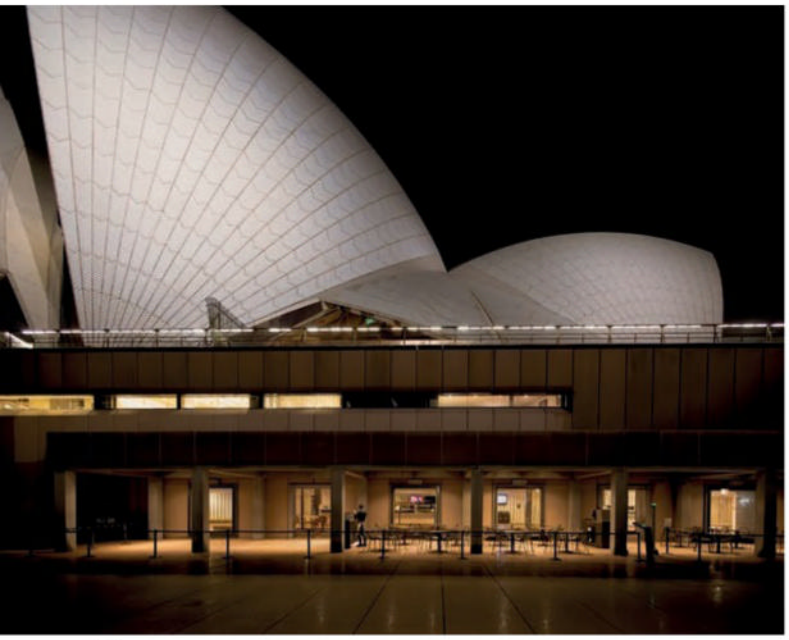


13 **TIMOTHY MOON** INTERLOCKED FACADES

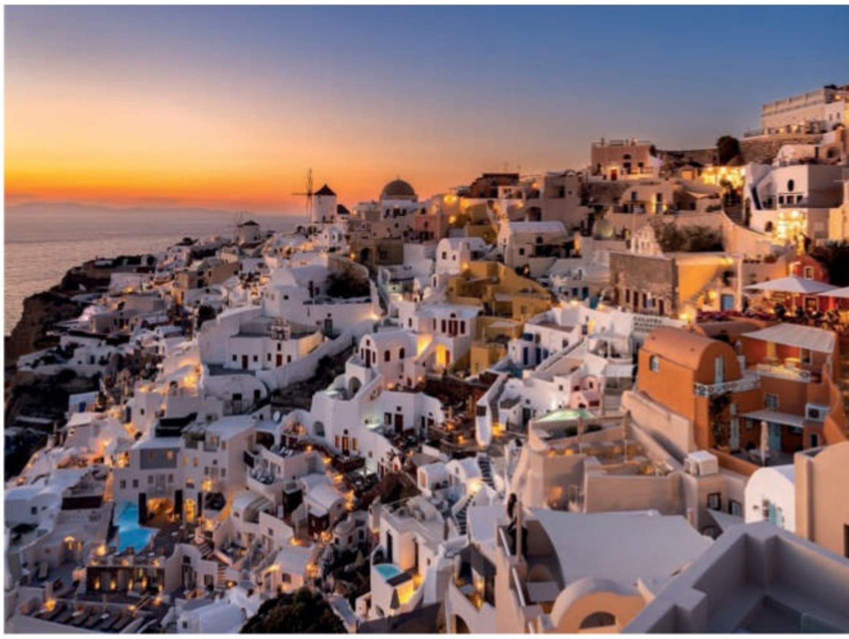
⑪ **TERESA QIN** FRAMING



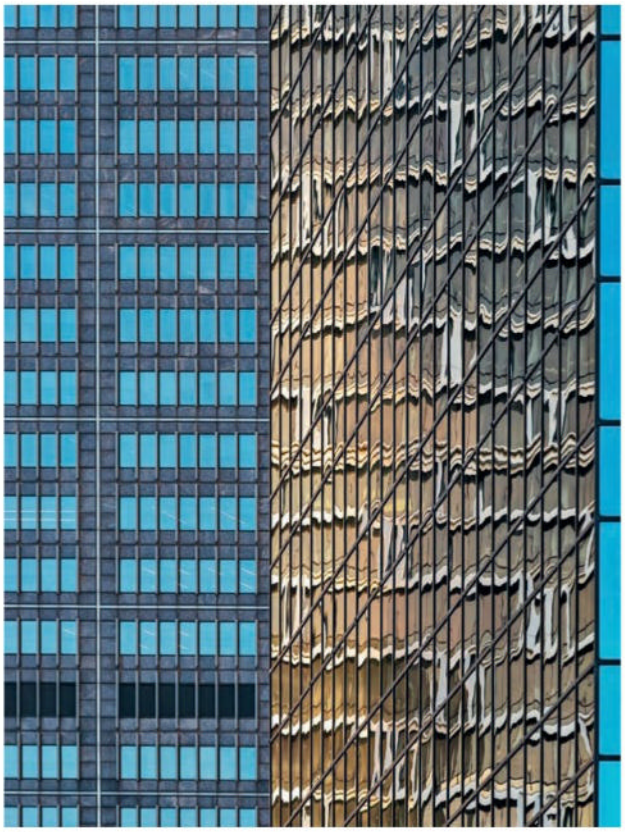
⑭ **JAMES BARRACLOUGH** PAST MEETS PRESENT



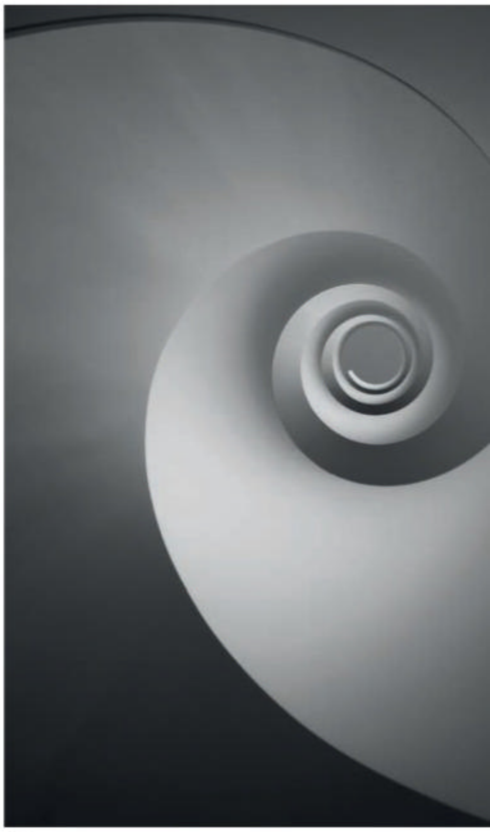
⑮ **JOANNE COSTANZO** NIGHT'S END AT THE OPERA



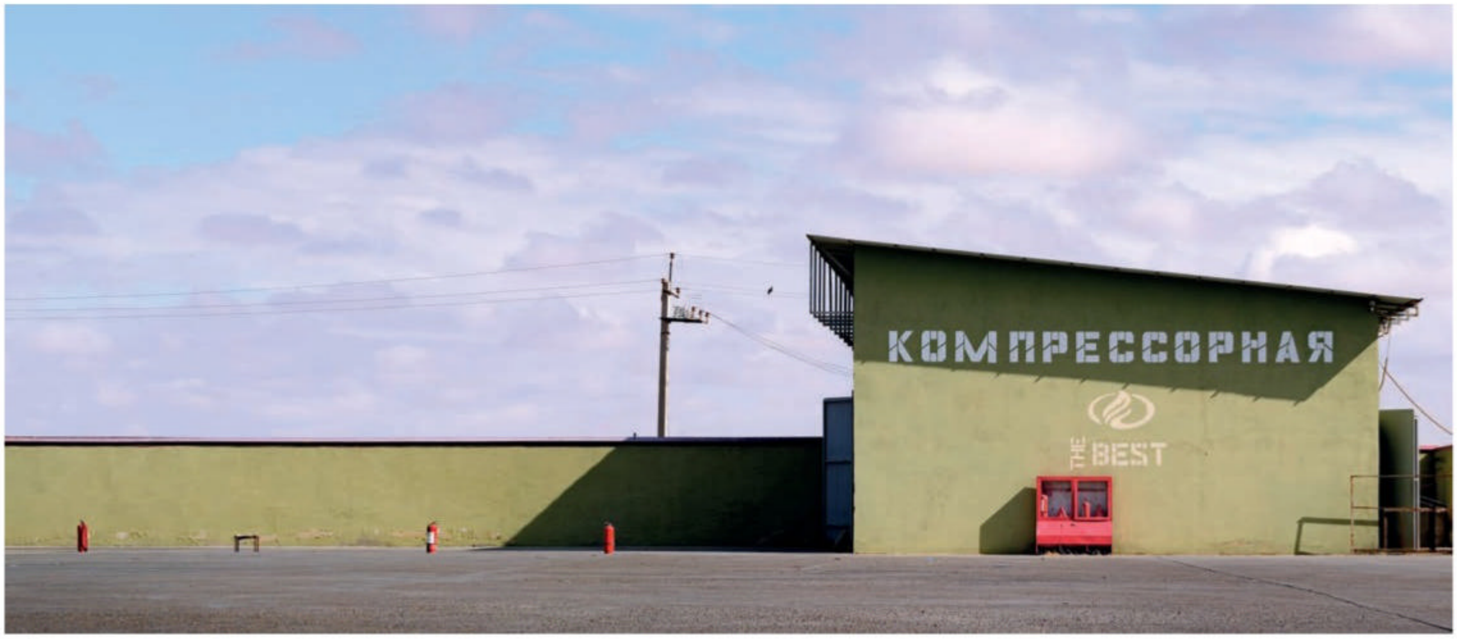
⑯ **KIM TALENTO** SANTORINI



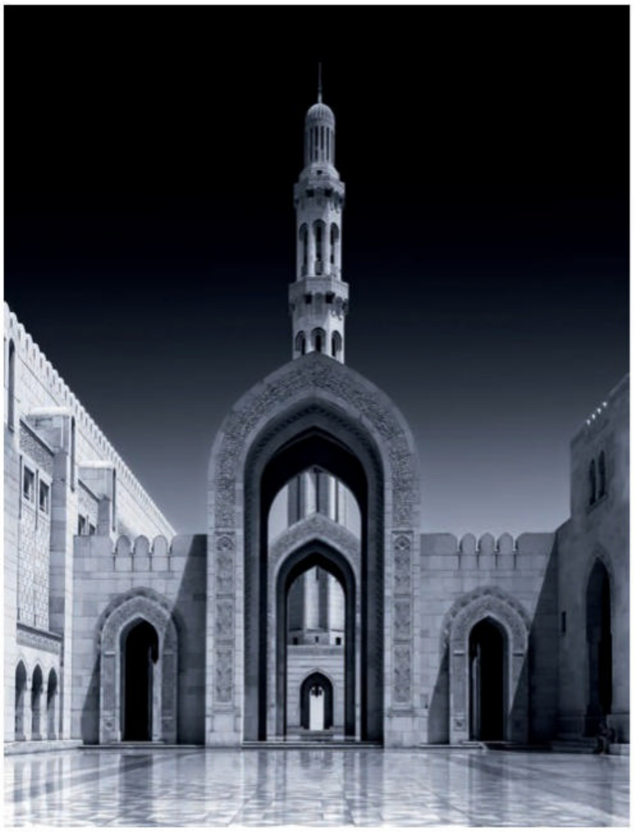
⑱ **TIMOTHY MOON** AFTERNOON REFLECTIONS



⑲ **LISA DIMITRI** THE SPIRAL



⑰ **RALPH MCCONAGHY** THE BEST...



⑳ **THOMAS MARTIN MCSHANE** FORM, FUNCTION & FAITH

FIT TO PRINT

BY MIKE O'CONNOR

A new exhibition that delves into Fairfax's archives to uncover defining moments from more than 50 years of Australian news history has opened at the National Library of Australia. We sat down for a chat with photojournalist Mike Bowers, who curated Fit to Print, to find out what he discovered when he took on the mammoth task of sorting through more than 18,000 historic images.

AUSTRALIAN PHOTOGRAPHY: How long have you been working on the exhibition, and how did the project kick off?
MIKE BOWERS: Dr Guy Hansen, the senior curator, contacted me last year about working on the Fairfax collection again. I had worked on it back in 2008 when I did a book on 100 years of photography at *The Herald*.

For that 2008 project, it was rewarding to breathe new life into forgotten photographs, some of which had disappeared from the archive. Rediscovering them again for this exhibition felt like bringing history back to life.

It was enjoyable, especially when handling the glass plates—sometimes you'd hold them up to the light and discover details that hadn't been seen for years. Studying these images feels like a direct link to my predecessors.

AP: One of the images is a wonderful shot of journalist George Bell carrying this enormous camera on horseback. Can you tell me about him and his work?
MB: Bell was the first photographer employed by Fairfax in 1898, making him one of our first photojournalists. He came from one of the major studios of the time, Kerry and Company, where they mainly shot portraits but also produced postcard scenes of Australian landmarks, such as Uluru.

At the time, these would be curated into visual books for entertainment. Kerry and Company had about 60,000 of these scenes on file.

Before the rise of half-tone reproduction for newspapers, images were often reproduced from woodcuts based on photographs. Eventually, newspapers realised they needed their own photographers, which led to Bell's employment by Fairfax.

FIND OUT MORE

Fit to Print runs until 20 July, and is free to visit. You can find out more at library.gov.au.

AP: You seem drawn to work that heralded new technologies in photojournalism. Why was this of interest?
MB: I wanted to highlight how camera technology evolved, especially the leaps like the development of new cameras with faster shutters. I found a newspaper article showcasing these innovations, which made a big deal of how photographers could now capture things in mid-air, or freeze an athlete in motion for the first time.

The technology trends also changed how scenes were captured. By the time of World War I, soldiers were often carrying pocket Kodaks that their families would send to the front.

The soldiers would process and send the films back, showing candid, real-life moments in the trenches, which were more photojournalistic than the staged war photography that was being sent back by professionals. The soldiers' photos had more of the photojournalistic quality we associate with modern photography.

AP: Did you approach the exhibition with a set structure in mind, like showcasing specific eras?
MB: Not really. I wanted to show how photography evolved over time, starting from around 1898 up to the 1940s, when glass plates were still in use during the early part of World War II.

I also wanted to include images of female sport, which was much more progressive than many people realise, and of which there were many images in the archive.

AP: What can modern photographers learn from looking at these images?
MB: I found a note that said photographers were given just 12 glass plates a day. If they had three or four

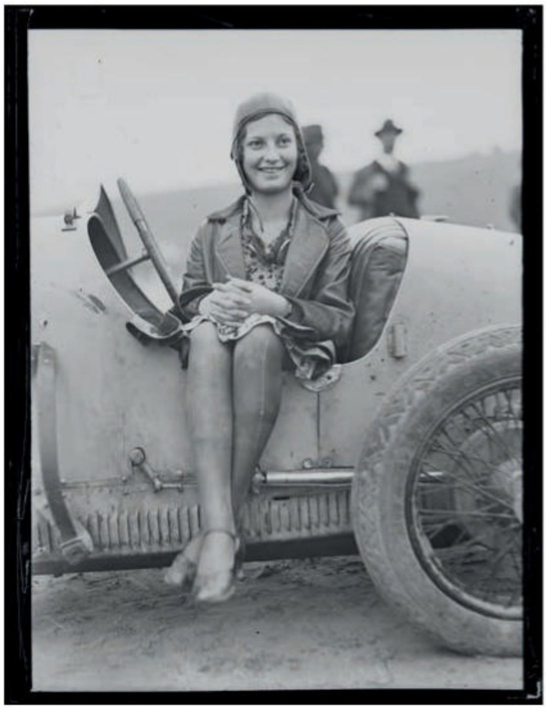


IMAGE: NLA.OBJ-157983478, COURTESY NATIONAL LIBRARY OF AUSTRALIA.

LEFT: Jean Thompson sits in her Type 37A Bugatti between races, 1930.

BELOW: Herbert Henry Fishwick, Lifesavers paying out rescue ropes during a surf carnival at Bondi Beach, Sydney, 1933.

BOTTOM: Men working on the propeller of HMAS Australia at Cockatoo Island Dock, Sydney, 1930.

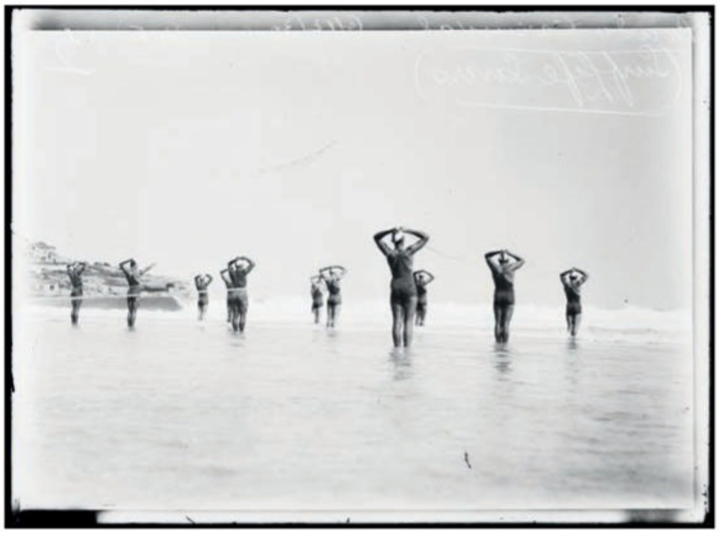


IMAGE: NLA.OBJ-162743987, COURTESY NATIONAL LIBRARY OF AUSTRALIA.

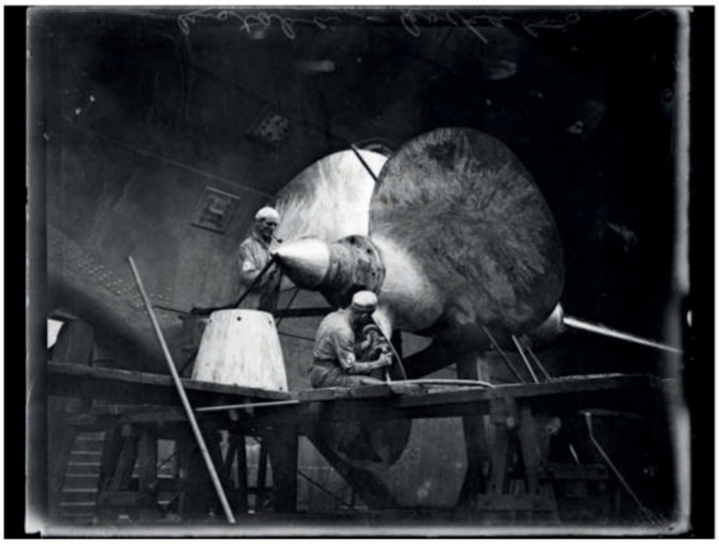


IMAGE: NLA.OBJ-161678472, COURTESY NATIONAL LIBRARY OF AUSTRALIA.

jobs, that meant only three or four frames to work with. Some photographers have said they don't warm up until they've taken 30 shots.

So these photographers had to be technically skilled. Many of their photos were beautifully exposed, even with slow emulsions, which required long exposures—sometimes up to two seconds for a portrait, even in bright sunlight.

Modern photographers can learn a lot from the technicality involved. The balance between shutter speed, ISO, and aperture is crucial.

The skill of handling the camera and making all these factors work together is something our predecessors were experts at. Their expertise doesn't diminish with time; it only enhances our understanding of how skilled they truly were.

AP: What's a standout image for you in the exhibition?
MB: One that stands out is the image of two men working on a propeller. It's quite dark, likely taken in a dry dock, and it captures this powerful tradition of showing humans dwarfed by monumental, man-made objects.

The composition is beautiful, especially with the man using a pneumatic grinder without any eye protection—just a cloth wrapped around his head. It's a striking example of the tough, dangerous work they were doing back then.

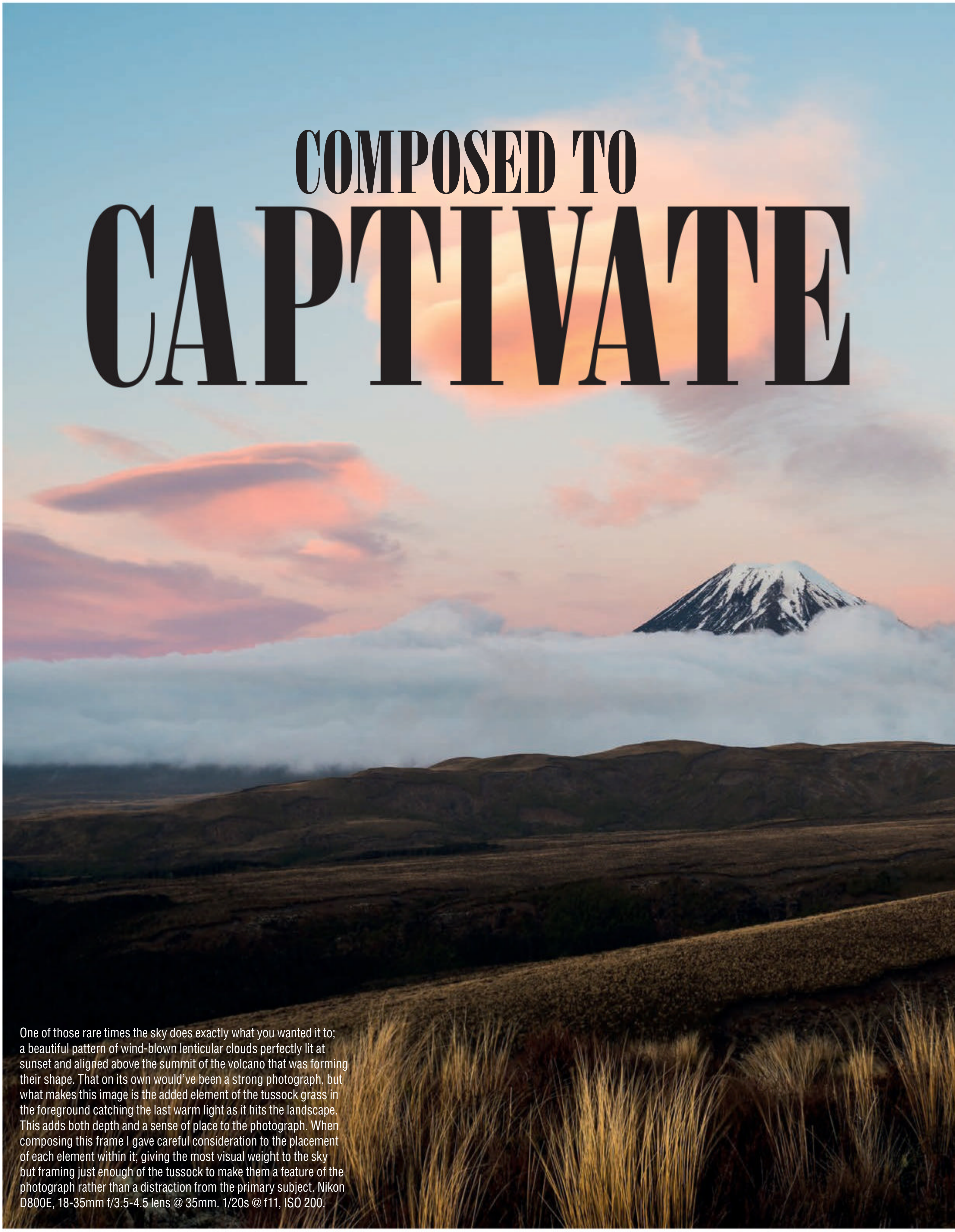
But there's other shots too with just beautiful details, that just demanded to be included for the pure visual deliciousness they bring.

AP: Why do you think these images are important for people to see?
MB: Someone asked me a similar question, and I referenced the great Katharine Graham, former publisher of *The Washington Post*. She quoted her late husband Phillip Graham who said that newspapers are the first rough draft of history, and I believe photographs are the receipts of that rough draft—they provide tangible proof to back up the stories.

It's our job to revisit and redefine them, looking at them through the lens of history. That's what I tried to do with this exhibition—bring the images back to life.

In today's digital world, where we're constantly looking at small images on screens, we lose the impact of beautifully printed photographs. When they're properly reproduced and displayed, their power is unlocked. From the feedback we've received, it seems that people are really experiencing that impact. ✪

COMPOSED TO CAPTIVATE



One of those rare times the sky does exactly what you wanted it to; a beautiful pattern of wind-blown lenticular clouds perfectly lit at sunset and aligned above the summit of the volcano that was forming their shape. That on its own would've been a strong photograph, but what makes this image is the added element of the tussock grass in the foreground catching the last warm light as it hits the landscape. This adds both depth and a sense of place to the photograph. When composing this frame I gave careful consideration to the placement of each element within it; giving the most visual weight to the sky but framing just enough of the tussock to make them a feature of the photograph rather than a distraction from the primary subject. Nikon D800E, 18-35mm f/3.5-4.5 lens @ 35mm. 1/20s @ f11, ISO 200.

BY RICHARD YOUNG

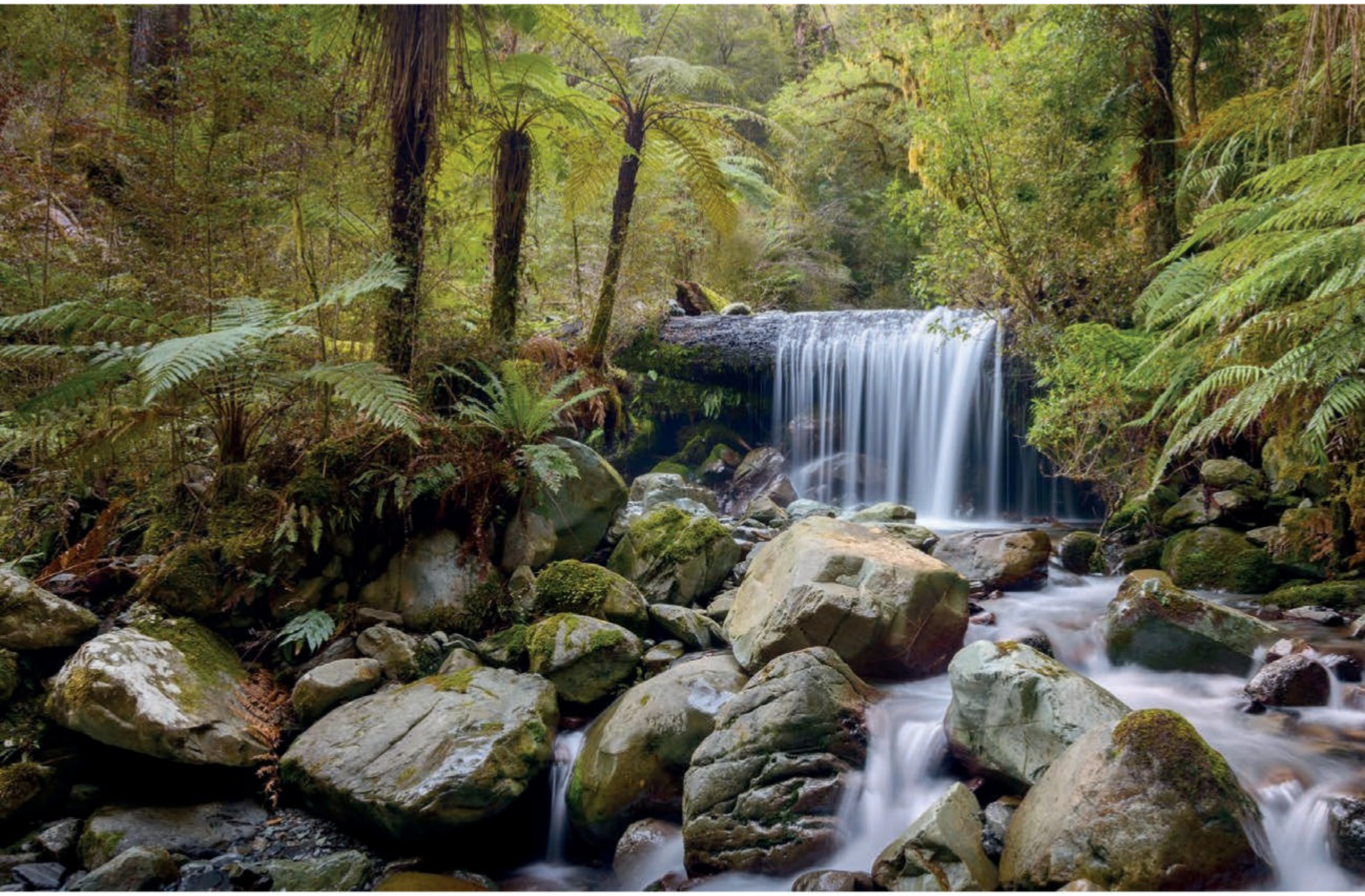
Great landscape photography isn't just about being in the right place at the right time—it's about how you frame what's in front of you. Here, we look at a few key ways to improve your compositions.

Composition is all about determining the story you wish for your photograph to tell, and then balancing elements in the frame as you decide how you want to portray them. When you look across a landscape with your naked eye, your brain quickly picks out subjects of interest. But the camera doesn't discriminate—it captures everything in view of the lens, which can lead to a cluttered, messy picture with no clear focal point. Working out what is required to create a good composition involves working out what your subject is and how you wish to place it in the frame. So the first point of the approach to any composition is to choose your primary subject—this might be a mountain peak, some rocks on the beach or maybe an interesting sky. Make your primary subject dominate your shot; don't leave your viewer lost and looking around for your subject. The next part of building your composition is working out the placement of other objects within the frame—do these add to the story, or do you need to remove or reduce their presence?

In this article, I offer some points to consider when building a composition. I have focused this on photographing the grand landscape, the vista, but much of this advice can also be applied to other styles of landscape photography or even different genres. Although I have presented these in a logical thought process, this is not meant to be a step-by-step guide on "how to build a composition"; there never can be such a thing. While these insights offer some guidance, you can't simply learn how to make better compositions by a textbook approach; making great compositions is more about discovering your expressive voice as a landscape photographer and the story you choose to tell.

FIND YOUR SUBJECT

When we think of landscape photography, we often envision grand vistas that capture the entire scene before us. You might think that the grand landscape does not have a specific "subject" and the whole landscape is the subject. But even when working on wider scenes, it's crucial to determine the story you wish to tell. Identify the key part of the landscape you want to highlight and give it the most visual weight in your composition. If the sky is full of colour, lower the horizon, but if there is an interesting foreground you want to make more of a feature of,



nudge the horizon up a bit. Likewise, if there is a part of the landscape that you want to include, such as a rock on the beach, a beautiful tussock grass, or a glowing mountain peak, make sure you fill enough of the frame to allow this to be a prominent subject in the final image. Make your subject dominate the frame—your viewer should not need to look around to find it.

GIVE YOUR SUBJECT SPACE

Subjects require space to breathe; having a subject too close to the edge of the frame can disrupt the visual flow of a composition. Strong compositions typically have space around edges without distractions, allowing other elements like the sky or surrounding landscape to contribute to the story. We have to be careful not to add so much negative space that a viewer has to look around the frame to find the subject; allow just enough space for it to breathe. When used correctly, negative space (empty and uncluttered) can enhance a photograph, allowing the viewer's eye space to travel around the frame and focus on what is essential.

CONSIDER YOUR VIEWPOINT

I often see people walk up to a location, get their tripod out of their bag, and before they've even properly looked around, set the tripod up at full height, put their camera on it, and start shooting without even thinking about it. By doing that, they've automatically decided they'll shoot right there. They've not considered the position, height, or angle they wish to work with their subject. Whenever you prepare to take a photograph, walk around, observe different heights and angles and see what changes these will create in the final photograph.

ADD A FOREGROUND

While all landscapes do not require foreground detail, adding them can enhance a photograph, making it more engaging and creating a sense of three-dimensionality. If you have found an interesting background for your photo, like a mighty peak, a moody sea or a fantastic sky, find some foreground interest to frame it, to give the shot extra depth and dimension. Seek locations where foreground details can lead the eye through the image; this could be

LEFT TOP: I'm often drawn to capturing smaller details as opposed to the grand landscape. But sometimes, a rare moment arises where I'm able to successfully pull both together—placing the smaller details within the grand landscape. The layers of frosty grass provide depth in the frame and a focal point without being too bold that it overpowers the peaks behind. The final print gives me the feeling that I'm still standing there, looking at the landscape on that perfect winter's morning. Nikon Z8, 45mm f/2.8 lens. 0.4s @ f13, ISO 64.

LEFT BOTTOM: Sometimes it is about focusing on the details in the landscape rather than the whole vista. I knew there was a photograph here as soon as I found this shattered ice pushed up on the side of the lake. While an interesting subject, it did not provide a photograph easily and I had to work hard to align the placement of all the layers within the frame. Like all good compositions, it was a challenge to compose. Once I was satisfied with the composition, I waited for the sun to slip onto the horizon and illuminate the shards. Nikon Z8, 85mm f/2.8 lens. 1/60s @ f14, ISO 64.

OPPOSITE: This is a classic landscape image with strong foreground detail leading to a secondary background subject. The waterfall was obviously picked as a primary subject, and then I moved around to place these foreground rocks in front of it to add depths to the image. The stream then leads you up to the waterfall and deeper into the photograph. It was shot on a 24mm lens to offer significant depth of field to achieve sharp focus of both the rocks and the waterfall. Photographing close to the rocks with the wide-angle perspective also enhances the visual impact of them, bringing them closer to you in the frame. Nikon D800E, 18-35mm f/3.5-4.5 lens @ 24mm. 3s @ f11, ISO 100.

> “WHEN MAKING DECISIONS ABOUT COMPOSITION, YOU SHOULD ALSO LOOK AROUND THE EDGES OF THE IMAGE...”

a line in some rocks, the tide mark, a path, a fence or a stream. Additionally, you can use foreground objects like branches, windows or doors to frame the main subject. Some of the most powerful landscape photographs have both a strong background and foreground; find your background, then find a foreground to frame it.

CONSIDER YOUR HEIGHT

The height at which you shoot can dramatically change the impact of a photograph. Getting down low and close to any foreground interest can change the sense of depth and dimension of an image. Getting some height by climbing on a rock or standing near the edge of a cliff can give you an unusual viewpoint and lead to an interesting shot. When photographing reflections, height makes a huge difference; by getting down low to the water you will increase the size of the reflection—or do the opposite by finding the highest angle you can get to remove them.

LOOK FOR DISTRACTIONS

Look around for details and decide what the distractions are and whether you can remove them from the image.

Can you remove these altogether by moving the camera position a little or zooming in? You can't always keep other objects out of the picture, but you can try to keep them in the background, so they don't have too much visual weight or make them part of the story. Do not rely on the option of Photoshop to remove something later. It is always best to achieve the ultimate image in the field if you can.

WATCH THE EDGES

When making decisions about composition, you should also look around the edges of the image. So often, I see people looking through the viewfinder or at the LCD screen, and they just focus on the subject and ignore everything around it. Make sure there is nothing intruding into the frame, like a branch or rock on the edge of it, and that you are not cutting off any important parts of the image. If so, you can often fix this by taking a small step to the side. Make sure your viewfinder or LCD display is clear and distraction-free without settings displaying on top of the image. All too often, I see people's display screens cluttered with too much information, hiding all the details around the edge of the image.

QUICK COMPOSITION TIPS

Ensure Your Subject Stands Out
Ensure your subject dominates the frame so the viewer's eye is immediately drawn to it—the viewer should not have to seek out the subject.

Use Focal Length to Shape Perspective
Give careful consideration to your lens focal lengths to control perspective within the shot.

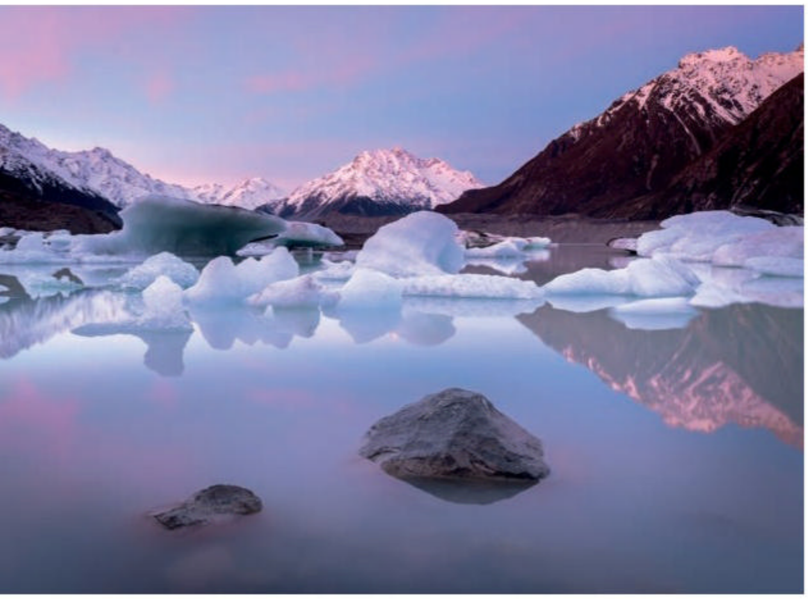
Mind the Edges of Your Frame
The edges of your composition are powerful and should be free of distractions. Any unnecessary elements along the borders can pull attention away from your subject and weaken the overall impact of the image.

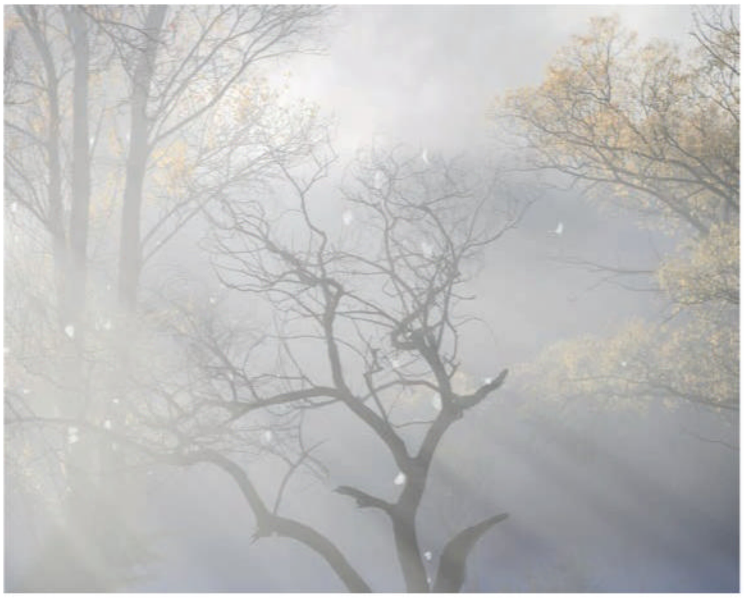
CONSIDER YOUR ASPECT RATIO

Most digital cameras have a 6x4 aspect ratio. That doesn't mean you're limited to just this ratio; some cameras allow you to set different aspect ratios in-camera. If you plan to use an alternative aspect ratio I strongly recommend giving this consideration while in the field. Relying on cropping later might result in your subject being too close to the edge of the frame without sufficient space around it. Aspect ratios are also a major stylistic choice and will govern the way you place objects within the frame.

CHOOSE YOUR FOCAL LENGTH

Often, photographers do not give enough consideration to lens focal lengths, simply zooming in or out to get the desired composition. Focal length controls so much more than just angle of view and changes perspective and also depth of field within our images. Learn to see in different focal lengths and the characteristics based around these choices. The best zoom you have is your feet. Select the





focal length that is required to compose the shot you want and then decide where you need to stand.

When I'm teaching workshops, I ask a group what they want to learn or improve; composition is often number one. I think one reason for this is that composition, unlike the technical aspects of photography, can't be easily learned from reading a book or a YouTube video. Some might refer people to the rules of composition—while these formulated approaches to placement of objects and horizon lines might make for a pleasing photograph, I do not think they will make a powerful or personal image.

One reason that composition is so challenging is it revolves around storytelling and what you're trying to express. I often see people approaching a landscape and trying to work out how to compose it, without first considering what they want to express. It is essential to determine what we want to express in an image—what the story is—before we can even approach building a composition. Composition is the way we bring elements together to express our own vision or story. So next time you are struggling to frame a photograph, take a step back and consider what you wish to express, as this is the first step to building your composition. ✪

LEFT TO RIGHT:
A perfect reflection—this shot is all about symmetry and balance. I positioned my tripod as low as possible to increase the size of the reflection making it comparable to that of the islands. Nikon D800E, 18-35mm f/3.5-4.5 lens @ 29mm. 8s @ f11, ISO 100;

Sunrise at Tasman Lake is a magical experience. This is a location where camera position and height are always critical; balancing the position of the icebergs and the background mountains. I chose to isolate the two small boulders in the foreground to add further depth. Nikon D800E, 18-35mm f/3.5-4.5 lens @ 26mm. 10s @ f11, ISO 64;

Every Autumn since 2017 I've tried, and every year I've failed to capture this tree well. But this time, I think I found a way to place the tree within the landscape in a way that works. As with all forest photography, small movements make big differences in the composition, and it's about changing angles to create space and separation between objects within the frame. Nikon Z8, 24-120mm f/4 lens @ 120mm. 1/400s @ f5.6, ISO 64.

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DUST TO DUST

This striking aerial presents a raw and sparse view of a cemetery in rural NSW.

WITH CORINNA LUEG

My preferred genres of photography are photojournalism, social documentary, and street photography—fields where there is little to no post-processing. I'm drawn to capturing a fleeting instant that encapsulates a larger story, highlights a social issue, or reflects the present-day reality of life.

Sometimes it's as simple as creatively capturing an ordinary moment—something people walk past every day without noticing. Other times, it's about being ready for that rare, unrepeatable moment that presents itself without warning. When I head out for a shoot, I'm trying to stay open—prepared for the unexpected, and alert to unplanned moments that might unfold before me.

At the heart of my practice is a desire to document the truth of our times. In an era when post-processing can create a false sense of perfection, and AI is increasingly blurring the boundaries of reality, I believe in staying as true to the moment as possible.

More and more, I've found myself relying on my phone camera to capture these images. It's less conspicuous than my DSLR and 18–200mm zoom lens, and far more accepted in public spaces where smartphones are now ubiquitous. Its subtlety allows for a more candid approach—ideal for the kind of unscripted, real-life photography I like.

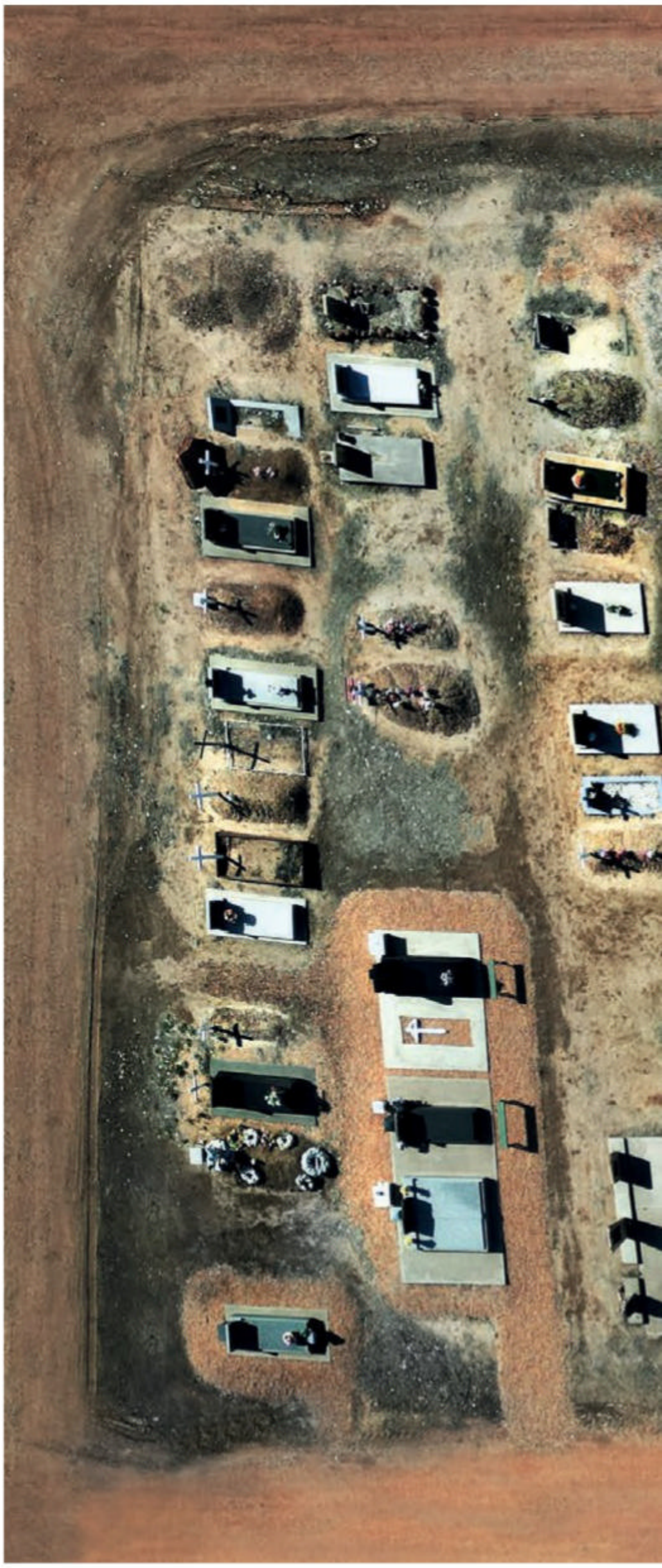
Since drones have become more accessible, I've also embraced them for photography. I'm drawn to the distinctive, top-down, bird's-eye perspective it offers. Even with aerial shots, I tend to look for images that carry a photojournalistic or documentary weight—photos that reveal patterns, stories, or social commentary from above.

One subject I've returned to frequently is cemeteries. With a drone, the geometric patterns of graves become strikingly visible, especially when long shadows from headstones stretch across the ground depending on the time of day. These visual elements add an unexpected layer of interest and solemn beauty.

This is one of my drone photographs, *Dust to Dust*, taken in Lightning Ridge, NSW, in September during the equinox. Shot mid-afternoon, the sun was still high, so the shadows were minimal. What stood out to me wasn't the absence of shade, but the distinct palette of the landscape—deep reds and dusty browns, typical of the Australian outback.

Unlike the lush green cemeteries most are familiar with—manicured lawns, flower beds, small shrubs—Lightning Ridge's cemetery is raw and sparse. From above, some graves resembled the town's signature opal mining mounds, known as mullock—piles of discarded, non-opal-bearing rocks. This visual similarity between burial site and mine waste struck me deeply, echoing themes of impermanence, value, and the remnants we leave behind.

DJI MINI 3 PRO. 1/2500S @ F1.7, ISO 100.



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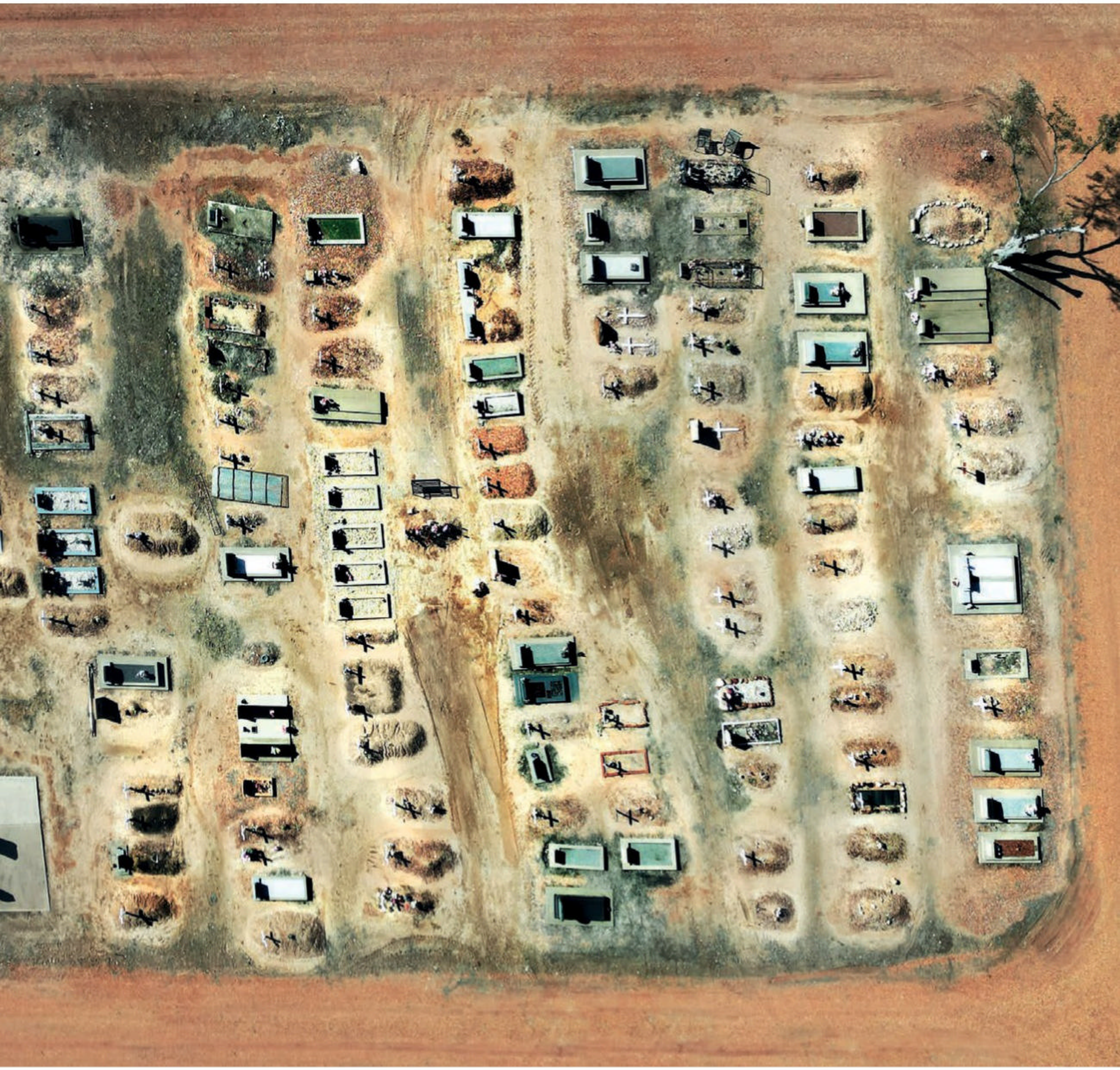

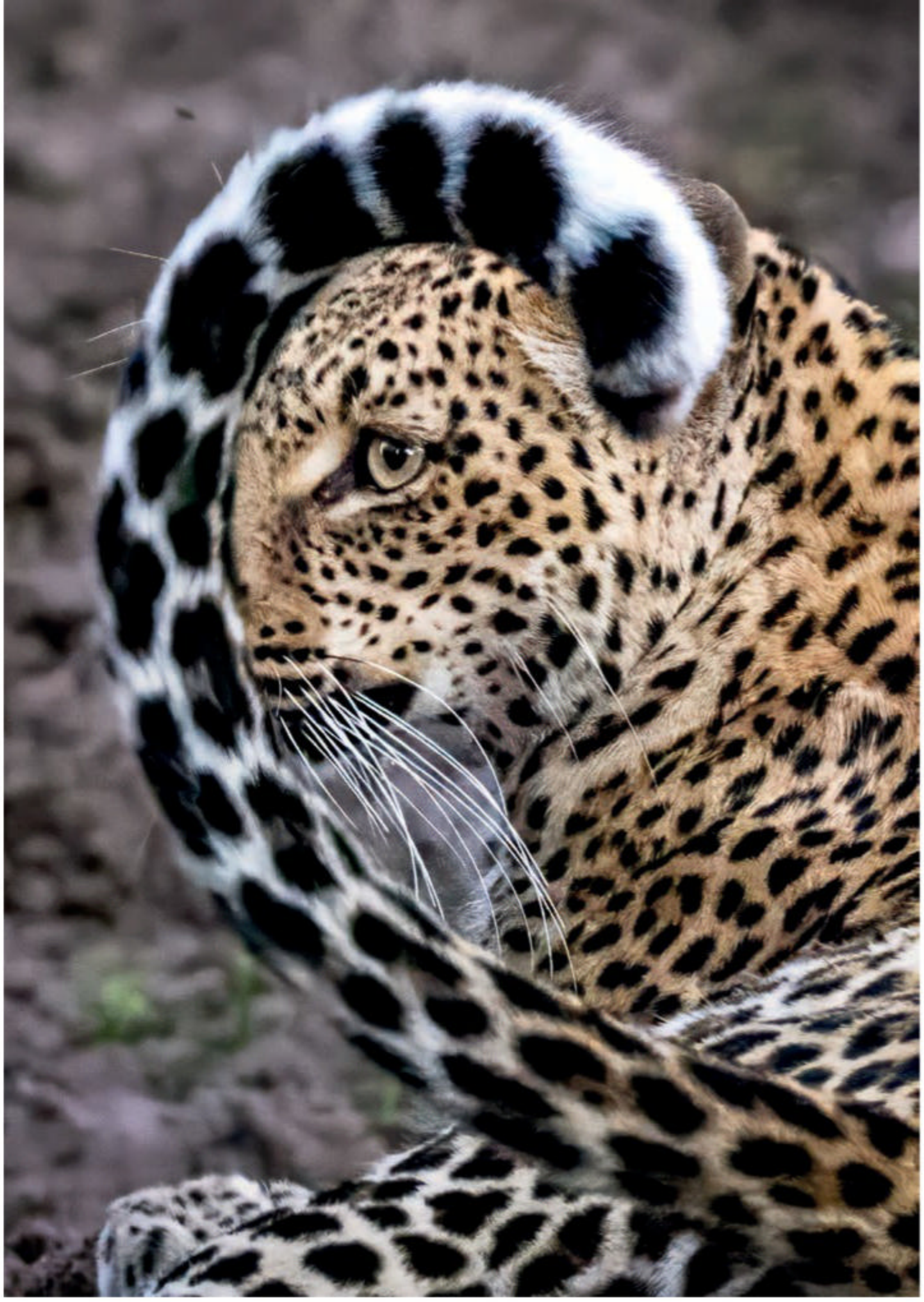

Sometimes things just don't go according to plan—and especially when travelling.

WITH A FLICK OF A TAIL

WITH ROZ ZITO

My preferred genre is wildlife photography, but wild animals rarely offer the perfect scenario for good photos. Birds perch on the twiggiest part of the branch. Bears fossick along riverbanks cloaked in deep shadow. Tigers snooze in tall grass. When your subject is a predator or a dangerous animal that might charge or ambush, there's often no way to adjust your position for the ideal background or perfect angle.

Last year, we finally went on safari. It was a dream, as safaris usually are, but it also demanded some creativity to overcome a number of challenges.

My favourite shot from the trip came from one such tricky encounter. We'd been observing a leopardess who had made a kill at the edge of an elephant wallow. After feeding, she wandered into the wallow for a drink.

We followed in our vehicle, but the angle was terrible. You don't get out of the vehicle around predators—it's like a mobile hide, and as long as you stay inside, they don't perceive you as prey. But that illusion disappears quickly if you start walking around. The guide couldn't reposition us either, as the vehicle would have bogged down in the mud. So we were stuck with the view—a classic bum shot.

Even more frustratingly, she was flicking her tail irritably, ruining every attempt I made to photograph her face. That tail just kept whipping across at the worst moments.

So, I changed tack. I focused on trying to use the tail as part of the composition. Using spot focus, I locked onto her eye and waited for the right flick of the tail—then fired off a burst of "spray and pray" shots, hoping to catch the magic.

Only one frame worked—but it was worth it. The eye is sharp, with a perfect catchlight, framed by the arc of her tail. It's a shot that stands out because it's a little different, a little unexpected.

By working with the limitations of the moment, I ended up with something more interesting than the conventional image I originally had in mind. ✪

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Image: "On the Wing" by Paul Balfe EFIAP MAPS - APS Vice President

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FUJIFILM GFX100RF

Forget the idea of Fujifilm's newest camera just being a bigger X100VI – instead, the GFX100RF looks to bring something fresh, as Drew Hopper finds out.

Fujifilm's newest medium format camera has a huge 102MP sensor, a 35mm f/4 lens (28mm full-frame equivalent), and features like a leaf shutter and built-in ND filter, all in a small body.

THE BODY

The Fujifilm GFX100RF is an interesting new direction for the GFX lineup, offering a medium format experience in a compact, fixed-lens design.

However unlike previous GFX models, which prioritised interchangeable lens flexibility, the GFX100RF embraces a more streamlined approach, delivering the signature depth, detail, and dynamic range of a 102MP sensor with a permanently attached 35mm f/4 lens (equivalent to 28mm in full-frame terms).

Fujifilm has managed to fit this large sensor into a body measuring approximately 144 x 87 x 75mm, making it the most compact medium format camera on the market – a pretty remarkable achievement from a design perspective.

This was achieved by utilising a leaf shutter, which eliminates the need for a large focal-plane shutter mechanism, and removing in-body image stabilization (IBIS) to reduce size and weight.

While some may lament the absence of IBIS, experienced photographers who have honed their hand-holding technique or use a tripod won't find it too limiting.

On the rear of the camera, the prominent dial positioned above the screen immediately draws attention. This dial is dedicated to adjusting the aspect ratio (crop) of your image, offering nine different options, from traditional ratios like 5:4 and 3:2 to unique Fujifilm signatures such as 17:6 and 65:24.

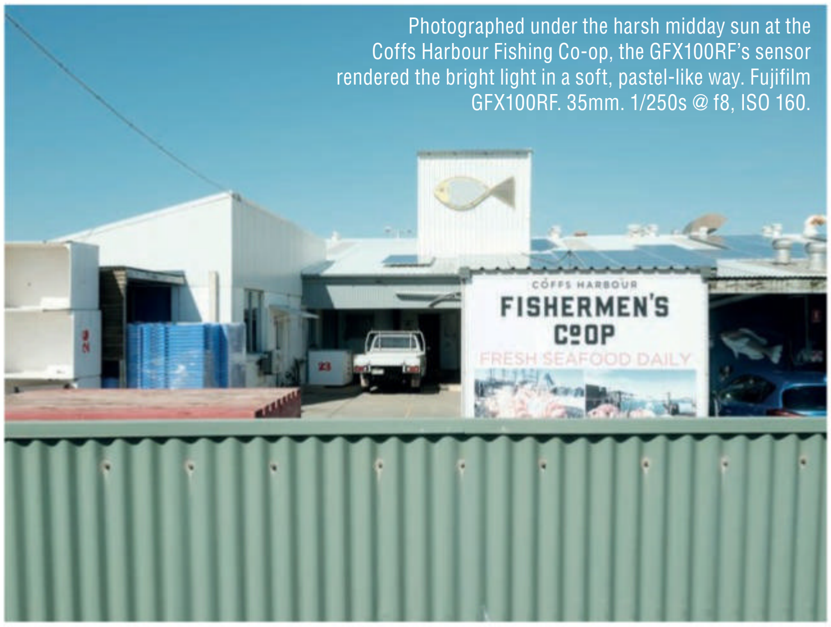
Also, for cinematic shots, the 16:9 ratio delivers that widescreen vibe, while the 65:24 ratio, inspired by the TX-1 and TX-2, gives a subtle panoramic look that's lots of fun to shoot.

The physical controls are well thought out, with custom function buttons that allow quick adjustments to essential settings. I'm very familiar with the X100VI, and the GFX100RF was an easy transition for my muscle memory.

A noticeable thing missing from the GFX100RF that the X100 series features is an OVF (optical viewfinder). At times I did find myself missing it, as I have a habit of raising the X100VI to my eye to view my composition before powering on the camera, thus saving battery life.

IMAGE QUALITY

As you'd expect, the GFX100RF delivers impressive IQ thanks to it sharing the same sensor as the GFX100S II. Combine the sensor with 20 of Fujifilm's iconic Film Simulation modes at your disposal, plus the ability to shoot 16-bit RAW files, and you've got one powerful beast.



Photographed under the harsh midday sun at the Coffs Harbour Fishing Co-op, the GFX100RF's sensor rendered the bright light in a soft, pastel-like way. Fujifilm GFX100RF. 35mm. 1/250s @ f8, ISO 160.

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Captured in the early hours with the Fujifilm GFX100RF, I exposed for the highlights and was able to recover the shadow detail easily. Fujifilm GFX100RF. 35mm. 3s @ f8, ISO 80.

The fixed 35mm f/4 lens delivers exceptional sharpness, even wide open, and provides a natural perspective well-suited for street photography, travel, and environmental portraiture. Its minimum focusing distance of 20cm adds flexibility for close-up shots, though the f/4 aperture may be limiting in low-light conditions.

I really enjoyed shooting landscapes at the base ISO of 80, with images packed with detail. It's probably a slightly unusual focal length for landscapes, but with such a low base ISO and the wide dynamic range, it's very easy to recover highlights and shadows.

Even shooting at higher ISOs, I found the noise acceptable because it looks almost film-like in comparison to a lot of other digital sensors. And, thanks to 16-bit RAW files being supported, you have the freedom in post to push or pull images easily.

THE LENS

The GFX100RF's 35mm f/4 lens offers excellent performance. But what's especially interesting about it is its compact size – despite covering a massive 44x33mm sensor, the lens barely protrudes 3cm.

Fujifilm have used a 10-element design with two aspherical elements and the aforementioned built-in leaf shutter to create a lens that produces crisp, sharp shots with speeds from a whopping 60 minutes in bulb mode to 1/4000s.

The sharpness is impressive too, especially at f/4. Stopped further down, I found the lens remained sharp from edge-to-edge without being too clinical. Natural textures, like foliage, look life-like, which is pleasing.

If I was to make one criticism of the lens, its that its a little slow, especially when you don't have the crutch of IBIS to rely on. At a maximum aperture of f4 it means you probably won't be using this camera for sports photography or wildlife, but then again most buyers of a product like this will already be aware of its limitations.

AUTOFOCUS

Medium format cameras are not known for their speed, but the GFX100RF still holds its own in this regard, with a few caveats.

I found the AI-powered autofocus performed well with detecting people, animals, birds, and vehicles. The focus is snappier than previous GFX models in low light, and the leaf shutter makes silent shooting possible as well.

That said, it's important to recognise that the GFX100RF is not designed as a run-and-gun camera despite its compact form factor. And, as its burst mode maxes out at a relatively slow 6fps, you likely won't be pulling this out for fast moving subjects.

Like all Fujifilm cameras I've shot with, tracking autofocus has a tendency to hunt and miss frames, and while the AI-powered subject detection sounds promising on paper, it doesn't quite match the speed and accuracy of competitors like Canon, Nikon, or Sony.

But for a camera like this there's something quite nice about using single-point AF, allowing for a more intentional and precise focus.

THE WRAP-UP

The Fujifilm GFX100RF feels like a step forward in the medium-format world, blending excellent image quality with surprising portability.

The compact body, combined with the 102MP sensor, provides plenty of detail and dynamic range, while the fixed 35mm f/4 lens offers sharp, somehow 'better than life' images.

And while the fixed lens won't suit every photographer, especially those who require more flexibility with focal lengths, it's more than enough for many applications like street, documentary, and landscape photography.

Of course, there's no such thing as the perfect camera, but Fujifilm has certainly created something special with the GFX100RF.

As a photographer passionate about traveling light, I can see myself easily tossing the GFX100RF into my bag on a hike or when out and about on the street, paired with my X100VI for a lightweight, versatile kit.

For those who specialise in portraiture or fashion, however, the GFX100S II with its interchangeable lenses is likely a better fit, and at an RRP of $8,799, this is an expensive piece of kit.

That said, the GFX100RF is a fantastic choice for anyone who needs or simply appreciates the highest image quality in a stylish, compact form. I recommend it highly. ✪

SCORE
8.2

RESULTS

HANDLING ★★★★★
A superb design, and excellent one hand use, with all the buttons and dials right where you would expect. Few do it better than Fujifilm when it comes to handling.

FEATURES ★★★★
Excellent, with a lot of features packed in, although the aspect ratio dial did feel a tad gimmicky after a while. The lack of IBIS might bother some photographers.

AUTOFOCUS ★★★
Solid, although as someone well-versed in Fujifilm's autofocus system, I believe the GFX100RF still has room for improvement in reliability.

IMAGE QUALITY ★★★★★
Stunning image quality, with loads of detail and contrast, producing breathtaking shots with incredible dynamic range. This is as good as it gets.

VALUE FOR MONEY ★★★½
While it's not the cheapest, the GFX100RF offers excellent value for photographers who need the highest image quality in a compact body, but it may struggle to justify its high price tag for more casual users.

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AFFINITY PHOTO (IPAD)

The Affinity Photo iPad app first appeared in the Apple app store in 2017, but in the proceeding years it has only become more capable. Steve Thomas takes a look.

At release, Affinity was an immediate hit with pro photographers, and with Serif being recently acquired by Australian tech darling Canva, we figured it was time to take a closer look at an app that has not only been widely lauded for its immense capability, but also for its reasonable one-time price of US $18.49 ($29 AUD).

At the same time, with many photographers seeking an alternative to the Adobe subscription system, I decided to give it a whirl to see if it is as good as it's said to be, and if it could help me break free from Adobe's shackles.

THE TECH AND FEATURES

At its core, Affinity is a non-destructive raster and layer based fully functional pro level photo editing app, which is very similar to Photoshop for iPad in capability terms but takes up a lot less in terms of system resources.

Affinity also shares many familiar editing tools with Adobe's products.

It's really hard to know where to start when it comes to features – as it has them all – well, almost. From RAW conversion to full layer-based non-destructive editing, image stacking, HDR merging, panorama stitching, colour channel swapping (for infrared), as well as some text and design features too, you're well-covered for the most common editing tasks.

The feature list is pretty much on par with the company's desktop app, but with a few adaptations and differences to make it iPad compatible, such as touch screen control. It's also compatible with iCloud and Dropbox for backup and storage.

What Affinity doesn't have is asset management and cataloguing capabilities, which is what has kept many of us with Lightroom.

IN USE

There is a steep learning curve with Affinity. This is not a tool for the one-stop batch edits like many of us do in Lightroom, instead this is a pro level app that needs time to learn.

After starting out with early versions of Photoshop on a desktop, I soon ditched it when Lightroom came around, and even now only switch from Lightroom to Photoshop for a few occasional tasks – such as colour reversal for infrared, and perhaps stitching panoramas.

The advantage for when you do need to switch between programmes is Photoshop is part of the Creative Cloud, and moving images between programmes is relatively seamless.

Once you introduce a programme like Affinity however, you'll need to find a workaround if you wish to do the same. At the same time, you'll also need to grasp the different platform terminology (such as personas for modes/modules) if coming from Adobe.

Luckily, Affinity does offer a great learning portal on its site and YouTube channel. But even then, to get past the first few stops with this app will take some time to learn.

THE WRAP-UP

Affinity Photo, in both iPad and desktop terms, is a very powerful pro grade editing tool, which is easily a match for the Adobe equivalents. It comes at a superb one-off price too (the full suite across all platforms costs US$165), and it is lighter on system resources as well.

Although it will not completely replace Lightroom for me, it is definitely an app worth investing time in. Where I see its value is when I want to take those "special" images a step further, and with the iPad and touch screen editing abilities it makes it far more fun too. ✪

You can download Affinity Photo from the Apple App Store or via www.affinity.serif.com.

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